LEEDS UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Classmark:

Special Collections

Health Sciences Historical Collection

SC2 WIT

30106016201963

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2015

https://archive.org/details/b21517356

Digitalis purpurea.

LIBRARY

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

FOXGLOVE,

AND

Some of its Medical Uſes:

WITH

PRACTICAL REMARKS ON DROPSY, AND OTHER DISEASES.

BY

WILLIAM WITHERING, M. D.
Phyſician to the General Hoſpital at Birmingham.

—— *nonumque prematur in annum.*

HORACE.

BIRMINGHAM: PRINTED BY M. SWINNEY;
FOR
G. G. J. AND J. ROBINSON, PATERNOSTER-ROW, LONDON.

M,DCC,LXXXV.

PREFACE.

AFTER being frequently urged to write upon this ſubject, and as often declining to do it, from apprehenſion of my own inability, I am at length compelled to take up the pen, however unqualified I may ſtill feel myſelf for the taſk.

The uſe of the Foxglove is getting abroad, and it is better the world ſhould derive ſome inſtruction, however imperfect, from my experience, than that the lives of men ſhould be hazarded by its unguarded exhibition, or that a medicine of ſo much efficacy ſhould be condemned and rejected as dangerous and unmanageable.

It

It is now about ten years ſince I firſt began to uſe this medicine. Experience and cautious attention gradually taught me how to uſe it. For the laſt two years I have not had occaſion to alter the modes of management; but I am ſtill far from thinking them perfect.

It would have been an eaſy taſk to have given ſelect caſes, whoſe ſucceſsful treatment would have ſpoken ſtrongly in favour of the medicine, and perhaps been flattering to my own reputation. But Truth and Science would condemn the procedure. I have therefore mentioned every caſe in which I have preſcribed the Foxglove, proper or improper, ſucceſsful or otherwiſe. Such a conduct will lay me open to the cenſure of thoſe who are diſpoſed to cenſure, but it will meet the approbation of others, who are the beſt qualified to be judges.

To the Surgeons and Apothecaries, with whom I am connected in practice, both in this town and at a diſtance, I beg leave to make

make this public acknowledgment, for the assistance they so readily afforded me, in perfecting some of the cases, and in communicating the events of others.

The ages of the patients are not always exact, nor would the labour of making them so have been repaid by any useful consequences. In a few instances accuracy in that respect was necessary, and there it has been attempted; but in general, an approximation towards the truth, was supposed to be sufficient.

The cases related from my own experience, are generally written in the shortest form I could contrive, in order to save time and labour. Some of them are given more in detail, when particular circumstances made such detail necessary; but the cases communicated by other practitioners, are given in their own words.

I must caution the reader, who is not a practitioner in physic, that no general deductions, decisive upon the failure or success

of the medicine, can be drawn from the caſes I now preſent to him. Theſe caſes muſt be conſidered as the moſt hopeleſs and deplorable that exiſt; for phyſicians are ſeldom conſulted in chronic diſeaſes, till the uſual remedies have failed: and, indeed, for ſome years, whilſt I was leſs expert in the management of the Digitalis, I ſeldom preſcribed it, but when the failure of every other method compelled me to do it; ſo that upon the whole, the inſtances I am going to adduce, may truly be conſidered as caſes loſt to the common run of practice, and only ſnatched from deſtruction, by the efficacy of the Digitalis; and this in ſo remarkable a manner, that, if the properties of that plant had not been diſcovered, by far the greateſt part of theſe patients muſt have died.

There are men who will hardly admit of any thing which an author advances in ſupport of a favorite medicine, and I allow they may have ſome cauſe for their heſitation; nor do I expect they will wave their uſual modes of judg-

judging upon the preſent occaſion. I could wiſh therefore that ſuch readers would paſs over what I have ſaid, and attend only to the communications from correſpondents, becauſe they cannot be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs any unjuſt predilection in favour of the medicine: but I cannot adviſe them to this ſtep, for I am certain they would then cloſe the book, with much higher notions of the efficacy of the plant than what they would have learnt from me. Not that I want faith in the diſcernment or in the veracity of my correſpondents, for they are men of eſtabliſhed reputation; but the caſes they have ſent me are, with ſome exceptions, too much ſelected. They are not upon this account leſs valuable in themſelves, but they are not the proper premiſes from which to draw permanent concluſions.

I wiſh the reader to keep in view, that it is not my intention merely to introduce a new diuretic to his acquaintance, but one which, though not infallible, I believe to be much more certain than any other in preſent uſe.

After all, in ſpite of opinion, prejudice, or error, TIME will fix the real value upon this diſcovery, and determine whether I have impoſed upon myſelf and others, or contributed to the benefit of ſcience and mankind.

Birmingham, 1ſt July,
1785.

INTRO-

INTRODUCTION.

THE Foxglove is a plant ſufficiently common in this iſland, and as we have but one ſpecies, and that ſo generally known, I ſhould have thought it ſuperfluous either to figure or deſcribe it; had I not more than once ſeen the leaves of Mullein* gathered for thoſe of Foxglove. On the continent of Europe too, other ſpecies are found, and I have been informed that our ſpecies is very rare in ſome parts of Germany, exiſting only by means of cultivation, in gardens.

Our plant is the *Digitalis purpurea* † of Linnæus. It belongs to the 2d order of the 14th claſs, or the DIDYNAMIA ANGIOSPERMIA. The *eſſential characters* of the genus are, *Cup with* 5 *diviſions. Bloſſom bell-ſhaped, bulging. Capſule egg-ſhaped,* 2*-celled.*— LINN.

DIGITA'LIS *purpu'rea.* Little leaves of the empalement egg-ſhaped, ſharp. Bloſſoms blunt; the upper lip entire. LINN.

REFE-

* Verbaſcum of Linnæus.

† The trivial name *purpurea* is not a very happy one, for the bloſſoms though generally purple, are ſometimes of a pure white.

References to Figures. These are disposed in the order of comparative excellence.

Rivini monopet. 104.
Flora danica, 74, *parts of fructification.*
Tournefort Institutiones. 73, *A*, *E*, *L*, *M.*
Fuchsii Hist. Plant. 893, *copied in*
Tragi stirp. histor. 889.
J. Bauhini histor. Vol. ii. 812. 3, *and*
Lonicera 74, 1.
Blackwell. auct. 16.
Dodonæi pempt. stirp. hist. 169, *reprinted in*
Gerard emacul. 790, 1, *and copied in*
Parkinson Theatr. botanic. 653, 1.
Gerard, first edition, 646, 1.
Histor. Oxon. Morison. V. 8, *row* 1. 1.
Flor. danic. 74, *the reduced figure.*

Blossom. The bellying part on the inside sprinkled with spots like little eyes. *Leaves* wrinkled. Linn.

Blossom. Rather tubular than bell-shaped, bulging on the under side, purple; the narrow tubular part at the base, white. *Upper lip* sometimes slightly cloven.

Chives. *Threads* crooked, white. *Tips* yellow.

Pointal. *Seed-bud* greenish. *Honey-cup* at its base more yellow. *Summit* cloven.

S. Vess. *Capsule* not quite so long as the cup.

Root. Knotty and fibrous.

Stem.

STEM. About 4 feet high; obſcurely angular; leafy.

LEAVES. Slightly but irregularly ſerrated, wrinkled; dark green above, paler underneath. *Lower leaves* egg-ſhaped; upper leaves ſpear-ſhaped. *Leaf-ſtalks* fleſhy; bordered.

FLOWERS. Numerous, moſtly growing from one ſide of the ſtem and hanging down one over another. *Floral-leaves* ſitting, taper-pointed. The numerous purple bloſſoms hanging down, mottled within; as wide and nearly half as long as the finger of a common-ſized glove, are ſufficient marks whereby the moſt ignorant may diſtinguiſh this from every other Britiſh plant; and the leaves ought not to be gathered for uſe but when the plant is in bloſſom.

PLACE. Dry, gravelly or ſandy ſoils; particularly on ſloping ground. It is a biennial, and flowers from the middle of *June* to the end of *July*.

I have not obſerved that any of our cattle eat it. The root, the ſtem, the leaves, and the flowers have a bitter herbaceous taſte, but I don't perceive that nauſeous bitter which has been attributed to it.

This plant ranks amongſt the LURIDÆ, one of the Linnæan orders in a natural ſyſtem. It has for congenera, NICOTIANA, ATROPA, HYOSCYAMUS, DATURA, SOLANUM, &c. ſo that from the knowledge we poſſeſs of the virtues of thoſe plants, and reaſoning from botanical analogy, we might be led to gueſs at ſomething of its properties.

I in-

I intended in this place to have traced the hiſtory of its effects in diſeaſes from the time of Fuchſius, who firſt deſcribes it, but I have been anticipated in this intention by my very valuable friend, Dr. Stokes of Stourbridge, who has lately ſent me the following

HISTORICAL VIEW of the Properties of Digitalis.

FUCHSIUS in his *hiſt. ſtirp.* 1542, is the firſt author who notices it. From him it receives its name of DIGITALIS, in alluſion to the German name of *Fingerhut*, which ſignifies a finger-ſtall, from the bloſſoms reſembling the finger of a glove.

SENSIBLE QUALITIES. Leaves bitteriſh, very naufeous. LEWIS *Mat. med.* i. 342.

SENSIBLE EFFECTS. Some perſons, ſoon after eating of a kind of omalade, into which the leaves of this, with thoſe of ſeveral other plants, had entered as an ingredient, found themſelves much indiſpoſed, and were preſently after attacked with vomitings. DODONÆUS *pempt.* 170.

It is a medicine which is proper only for ſtrong conſtitutions, as it purges very violently, and excites exceſſive vomitings. RAY. *hiſt.* 767.

BOERHAAVE judges it to be of a poiſonous nature, *hiſt. plant.* but Dr. ALSTON ranks it among thoſe indigenous vegetables, "which, though now diſre-

"garded,

" garded, are medicines of great virtue, and ſcarce-
" ly inferior to any that the Indies afford." LEWIS *Mat. med.* i. *p.* 343.

Six or ſeven ſpoonfuls of the decoction produce nauſea and vomiting, and purge; not without ſome marks of a deleterious quality. HALLER *hiſt. n.* 330 from *Aerial Inſt. p.* 49, 50.

The following is an abridged ACCOUNT of its EFFECTS upon TURKEYS.

M. SALERNE, a phyſician at Orleans, having heard that ſeveral turkey pouts had been killed by being fed with Foxglove leaves, inſtead of mullein, he gave ſome of the ſame leaves to a large vigorous turkey. The bird was ſo much affected that he could not ſtand upon his legs, he appeared drunk, and his excrements became reddiſh. Good nouriſhment reſtored him to health in eight days.

Being then determined to puſh the experiment further, he chopped ſome more leaves, mixed them with bran, and gave them to a vigorous turkey cock which weighed ſeven pounds. This bird ſoon appeared drooping and melancholy; his feathers ſtared, his neck became pale and retracted. The leaves were given him for four days, during which time he took about half a handful. Theſe leaves had been gathered about eight days, and the winter was far advanced. The excrements, which are naturally

ally green and well formed, became, from the firſt, liquid and reddiſh, like thoſe of a dyſenteric patient.

The animal refuſing to eat any more of this mixture which had done him ſo much miſchief, I was obliged to feed him with bran and water only; but notwithſtanding this, he continued drooping, and without appetite. At times he was ſeized with convulſions, ſo ſtrong as to throw him down; in the intervals he walked as if drunk; he did not attempt to perch, he uttered plaintive cries. At length he refuſed all nouriſhment. On the fifth or ſixth day the excrements became as white as chalk; afterwards yellow, greeniſh, and black. On the eighteenth day he died, greatly reduced in fleſh, for he now weighed only three pounds.

On opening him we found the heart, the lungs, the liver, and gall-bladder ſhrunk and dried up; the ſtomach was quite empty, but not deprived of its villous coat. *Hiſt. de l'Academ.* 1748. *p.* 84.

Epilepsy.—"It hath beene of láter experience "found alſo to bé effectual againſt the falling ſick-"neſſe, that divers have been cured thereby; for "after the taking of the *Decoct. manipulor. ii. c. poly-*"*pod. quercin. contus.* ℥*iv. in cereviſia*, they that have "been troubled with it twenty-ſix years, and have "fallen once in a weeke, or two or three times in a "moneth, have not fallen once in fourteen or fif-"teen moneths, that is until the writing hereof."

Parkinſon, p. 654.

Scrophula.—

SCROPHULA.—" The herb bruiſed, or the juice " made up into an ointment, and applied to the " place, hath been found by late experience to be " availeable for the King's Evill." PARK. p. 654.

Several hereditary inſtances of this diſeaſe ſaid to have been cured by it. AEREAL INFLUENCES, *p* 49, 50, quoted by HALLER, *hiſt. n.* 330.

A man with *ſcrophulous ulcers* in various parts of the body, and which in the right leg were ſo virulent that its amputation was propoſed, cured by *ſucc. expreſs. cochl. i. bis intra xiv. dies, in* ½ *pinta cereviſiæ calidæ.*

The leaves remaining after the preſſing out of the juice, were applied every day to the ulcers. *Pract. eſs. p.* 40. quoted by MURRAY *apparat. medicam. i. p.* 491.

A young woman with a *ſcrophulous tumour of the eye*, a remarkable *ſwelling of the upper lip, and painful tumours of the joints of the fingers*, much relieved; but the medicine was left off, on account of its violent effects on the conſtitution. *Ib. p.* 42 quoted as above.

A man with a *ſcrophulous tumour of the right elbow*, attended for three years *with excruciating pains*, was nearly cured by four doſes of the juice taken once a month. *Ib. p.* 43. as above.

The phyſicians and ſurgeons of the Worceſter Infirmary have employed it in ointments and poultices with remarkable efficacy. *Ib. p.* 44. It was recom-

commended to them by Dr. Baylies of Eveſham, now of Berlin, as a remedy for this diſeaſe. Dr. Wall gave it a tryal, as well externally as internally, but their experiments did not lead them to obſerve any other properties in it, than thoſe of a highly nauſeating medicine and draſtic purgative.

Wounds. In conſiderable eſtimation for the healing all kinds of wounds, *Lobel. adv.* 245.

Principally of uſe in ulcers, which diſcharge conſiderably, being of little advantage in ſuch as are dry. Hulse, in R. hiſt. 768.

Doctor Baylies, phyſician to his Pruſſian Majeſty, informed me, when at Berlin, that he employed it with great ſucceſs in caries, and obſtinate ſore legs.

Dyspnœa *Pituitoſa* Sauvages i. 657.—" Boiled " in water, or wine, and drunken doth cut and " conſume the thicke toughneſſe of groſſe, and " ſlimie flegme, and naughtie humours. The " ſame, or boiled with honied water or ſugar, doth " ſcoure and clenſe the breſt, ripeneth and bring- " eth foorth tough and clammie flegme. It open- " eth alſo the ſtoppage of the liver ſpleene and " milt, and of the inwarde parts." Gerarde hiſt. " ed. I. p. 647.

" Whenſoever there is need of a rarefying or " extenuating of tough flegme or viſcous humours " troubling the cheſt,—the decoction or juice here- " of made up with ſugar or honey is availeable, as " alſo to clenſe and purge the body both upwards " and

" and downwards ſometimes, of tough flegme, and
" clammy humours, notwithſtanding that theſe
" qualities are found to bee in it, there are but few
" phyſitions in our times that put it to theſe uſes,
" but it is in a manner wholly neglected."

PARKINSON, p. 654.

Previous to the year 1777, you informed me of the great ſucceſs you had met with in curing dropſies by means of the ſol. Digitalis, which you then conſidered as a more certain diuretic than any you had ever tried. Some time afterwards, Mr. Ruſſel, ſurgeon, of Worceſter, having heard of the ſucceſs which had attended ſome caſes in which you had given it, requeſted me to obtain for him any information you might be inclined to communicate reſpecting its uſe. In conſequence of this application, you wrote to me in the following terms.*

In a letter which I received from you in London, dated *September* 29, 1778, you write as follows:—
" I wiſh it was as eaſy to write upon the Digitalis—
" I deſpair of pleaſing myſelf or inſtructing others,
" in a ſubject ſo difficult. It is much eaſier to
" write upon a diſeaſe than upon a remedy. The
" former is in the hands of nature, and a faithful
" obſerver, with an eye of tolerable judgment,
" cannot fail to delineate a likeneſs. The latter
" will ever be ſubject to the whims, the inaccura-
" cies, and the blunders of mankind."—

In

* See the extract from this letter at page 5.

In my notes I find the following memorandum—"*February* 20th, 1779, gave an account of Doctor "Withering's practice, with the precautions ne- "ceſſary to its ſucceſs, to the Medical Society at "Edinburgh."—In the courſe of that year, the Digitalis was preſcribed in the Edinburgh Infirmary, by Dr. Hope, and in the following year, whilſt I was Clerk to Dr. Home, as Clinical Profeſſor, I had a favourable opportunity of obſerving its ſenſible effects.

In one caſe in which it was given properly at firſt, the urine began to flow freely on the ſecond day. On the third, the ſwellings began to ſubſide. The doſe was then increaſed more than *quadruple* in the twenty-four hours. On the fifth day ſickneſs came on, and much purging, but the urine ſtill increaſed though the pulſe ſunk to 50. On the 7th day, a *quadruple* doſe of the infuſion was ordered to be taken every third hour, ſo as to bring on naufea again. The pulſe fell to forty-four, and at length to thirty-five in a minute. The patient gradually ſunk and died on the ſixteenth day; but previous to her death, for two or three days, her pulſe roſe to near one hundred.—It is needleſs to obſerve to you, how widely the treatment of this caſe differed from the method which you have found ſo ſucceſsful.

OF

OF THE PLATE.

THE figure of the Foxglove, facing the Title Page, is copied by the permiſſion and under the inſpection of Mr. Curtis, from his admirable work, entitled FLORA LONDINENSIS. The accuracy of the drawings, the beauty of the colouring, the full deſcriptions, the accurate ſpecific diſtinctions, and the uſes of the different plants, cannot fail to recommend that work to the patronage of all who are intereſted in the encouragement of genius, or the promotion of uſeful knowledge.

EXPLANATION.

Fig. 1. The Empalement.

Fig. 2, 3, 4. Four CHIVES two long and two ſhort, TIPS at firſt large, turgid, oval, touching at bottom, of a yelloviſh colour, and often ſpotted; laſtly changing both their form and ſituation in a ſingular manner.

Fig. 5, 6, 7. SEED-BUD rather conical, of a yellow green colour. *Shaft* ſimple. *Summit* cloven.

Fig. 8. *Honeycup* a gland, ſurrounding the bottom of the Seed-bud.

Fig. 9. SEED-VESSEL, a pointed oval *Capſule*, of two cells and two valves, the lowermoſt valve ſplitting in two.

Fig. 10. SEEDS numerous, blackiſh, ſmall, lopped at each end.

AN

AN

ACCOUNT

OF THE

INTRODUCTION of FOXGLOVE

INTO

MODERN PRACTICE.

AS the more obvious and ſenſible properties of plants, ſuch as colour, taſte, and ſmell, have but little connexion with the diſeaſes they are adapted to cure; ſo their peculiar qualities have no certain dependence upon their external configuration. Their chemical examination by fire, after an immenſe waſte of time and labour, having been found uſeleſs, is now abandoned by general conſent. Poſſibly other modes of analyſis will be found out, which may turn to better account; but we have hitherto made only a very ſmall progreſs in the chemiſtry of animal and vegetable ſubſtances. Their virtues muſt therefore be learnt, either from obſerving their effects upon inſects and quadrupeds; from analogy, deduced from the already known powers of ſome of their congenera, or from the empirical uſages and experience of the populace.

The firſt method has not yet been much attended to; and the ſecond can only be perfected in proportion as we approach towards the diſcovery of a truly natural ſyſtem; but the laſt, as far as it extends, lies

within the reach of every one who is open to information, regardleſs of the ſource from whence it ſprings.

It was a circumſtance of this kind which firſt fixed my attention on the Foxglove.

In the year 1775, my opinion was aſked concerning a family receipt for the cure of the dropſy. I was told that it had long been kept a ſecret by an old woman in Shropſhire, who had ſometimes made cures after the more regular practitioners had failed. I was informed alſo, that the effects produced were violent vomiting and purging; for the diuretic effects ſeemed to have been overlooked. This medicine was compoſed of twenty or more different herbs; but it was not very difficult for one converſant in theſe ſubjects, to perceive, that the active herb could be no other than the Foxglove.

My worthy predeceſſor in this place, the very humane and ingenious Dr. Small, had made it a practice to give his advice to the poor during one hour in a day. This practice, which I continued until we had an Hoſpital opened for the reception of the ſick poor, gave me an opportunity of putting my ideas into execution in a variety of caſes; for the number of poor who thus applied for advice, amounted to between two and three thouſand annually. I ſoon found the Foxglove to be a very powerful diuretic; but then, and for a conſiderable time afterwards, I gave it in doſes very much too large

large, and urged its continuance too long; for misled by reasoning from the effects of the squill, which generally acts best upon the kidneys when it excites nausea, I wished to produce the same effect by the Foxglove. In this mode of prescribing, when I had so many patients to attend to in the space of one, or at most of two hours, it will not be expected that I could be very particular, much less could I take notes of all the cases which occurred. Two or three of them only, in which the medicine succeeded, I find mentioned amongst my papers. It was from this kind of experience that I ventured to assert, in the Botanical Arrangement published in the course of the following spring, that the Digitalis purpurea "merited more attention than modern practice be-"stowed upon it."

I had not, however, yet introduced it into the more regular mode of prescription; but a circumstance happened which accelerated that event. My truly valuable and respectable friend, Dr. Ash, informed me that Dr. Cawley, then principal of Brazen Nose College, Oxford, had been cured of a Hydrops Pectoris, by an empirical exhibition of the root of the Foxglove, after some of the first physicians of the age had declared they could do no more for him. I was now determined to pursue my former ideas more vigorously than before, but was too well aware of the uncertainty which must attend on the exhibition of the *root* of a *biennial* plant, and therefore continued to use the *leaves*. These I had found to vary much as to dose, at different seasons of the year;

but I expected, if gathered always in one condition of the plant, viz. when it was in its flowering ſtate, and carefully dried, that the doſe might be aſcertained as exactly as that of any other medicine; nor have I been diſappointed in this expectation. The more I ſaw of the great powers of this plant, the more it ſeemed neceſſary to bring the doſes of it to the greateſt poſſible accuracy. I ſuſpected that this degree of accuracy was not reconcileable with the uſe of a *decoction*, as it depended not only upon the care of thoſe who had the preparation of it, but it was eaſy to conceive from the analogy of another plant of the ſame natural order, the tobacco, that its active properties might be impaired by long boiling. The decoction was therefore diſcarded, and the *infuſion* ſubſtituted in its place. After this I began to uſe the leaves in *powder*, but I ſtill very often preſcribe the infuſion.

Further experience convinced me, that the *diuretic* effects of this medicine do not at all depend upon its exciting a nauſea or vomiting; but, on the contrary, that though the increaſed ſecretion of urine will frequently ſucceed to, or exiſt along with theſe circumſtances, yet they are ſo far from being friendly or neceſſary, that I have often known the diſcharge of urine checked, when the doſes have been imprudently urged ſo as to occaſion ſickneſs.

If the medicine purges, it is almoſt certain to fail in its deſired effect; but this having been the caſe, I have ſeen it afterwards ſucceed when joined with ſmall

ſmall doſes of opium, ſo as to reſtrain its action on the bowels.

In the ſummer of the year 1776, I ordered a quantity of the leaves to be dried, and as it then became poſſible to aſcertain its doſes, it was gradually adopted by the medical practitioners in the circle of my acquaintance.

In the month of *November* 1777, in conſequence of an application from that very celebrated ſurgeon, Mr. Ruſſel, of Worceſter, I ſent him the following account, which I chooſe to introduce here, as ſhewing the ideas I then entertained of the medicine, and how much I was miſtaken as to its real doſe.—

" I generally order it in decoction. Three drams of " the dried leaves, collected at the time of the bloſ- " ſoms expanding, boiled in twelve to eight ounces of " water. Two ſpoonfuls of this medicine, given eve- " ry two hours, will ſooner or later excite a naufea. " I have ſometimes uſed the green leaves gathered in " winter, but then I order three times the weight; " and in one inſtance I uſed three ounces to a pint " decoction, before the deſired effect took place. I " conſider the Foxglove thus given, as the moſt cer- " tain diuretic I know, nor do its diuretic effects " depend merely upon the naufea it produces, for " in caſes where ſquill and ipecac. have been ſo " given as to keep up a naufea ſeveral days together, " and the flow of urine not taken place, I have found " the Foxglove to ſucceed; and I have, in more than " one inſtance, given the Foxglove in ſmaller and

" more diſtant doſes, ſo that the flow of urine has " taken place without any ſenſible affection of the " ſtomach; but in general I give it in the manner " firſt mentioned, and order one doſe to be taken " after the ſickneſs commences. I then omit all me- " dicines, except thoſe of the cordial kind are wanted, " during the ſpace of three, four, or five days. By " this time the nauſea abates, and the appetite be- " comes better than it was before. Sometimes the " brain is conſiderably affected by the medicine, and " indiſtinct viſion enſues; but I have never yet " found any permanent bad effects from it."—

" I uſe it in the Aſcites, Anaſarca, and Hydrops " Pectoris; and ſo far as the removal of the water " will contribute to cure the patient, ſo far may be " expected from this medicine: but I wiſh it not to " be tried in aſcites of female patients, believing " that many of theſe caſes are dropſies of the ovaria; " and no ſenſible man will ever expect to ſee theſe " encyſted fluids removed by any medicine."

" I have often been obliged to evacuate the water " repeatedly in the ſame patient, by repeating the " decoction; but then this has been at ſuch diſtances " of time as to allow of the interference of other " medicines and a proper regimen, ſo that the patient " obtains in the end a perfect cure. In theſe caſes " the decoction becomes at length ſo very diſagree- " able, that a much ſmaller quantity will produce the " effect, and I often find it neceſſary to alter its " taſte by the addition of Aq. Cinnam. ſp. or Aq. " Juniper. compoſita." " I al-

"I allow, and indeed enjoin my patients to drink "very plentifully of ſmall liquors through the whole "courſe of the cure; and ſometimes, where the eva- "cuations have been very ſudden, I have found a "bandage as neceſſary as in the uſe of the trochar."—

Early in the year 1779, a number of dropſical caſes offered themſelves to my attention, the conſequences of the ſcarlet fever and ſore throat which had raged ſo very generally amongſt us in the preceding year. Some of theſe had been cured by ſquills or other diuretics, and relapſed; in others, the dropſy did not appear for ſeveral weeks after the original diſeaſe had ceaſed: but I am not able to mention many particulars, having omitted to make notes. This, however, is the leſs to be regretted, as the ſymptoms in all were very much alike, and they were all without an exception cured by the Foxglove.

This laſt circumſtance encouraged me to uſe the medicine more frequently than I had done heretofore, and the increaſe of practice had taught me to improve the management of it.

In *February* 1779, my friend, Dr. Stokes, communicated to the Medical Society at Edinburgh the reſult of my experience of the Foxglove; and, in a letter addreſſed to me in *November* following, he ſays, "Dr. Hope, in conſequence of my mentioning its "uſe to my friend, Dr. Broughton, has tried the "Foxglove in the Infirmary with ſucceſs." Dr. Stokes

Stokes alſo tells me that Dr. Hamilton cured Dropſies with it in the year 1781.

I am informed by my very worthy friend Dr. Duncan, that Dr. Hamilton, who learnt its uſe from Dr. Hope, has employed it very frequently in the Hoſpital at Edinburgh. Dr. Duncan alſo tells me, that the late very ingenious and accompliſhed Mr. Charles Darwin, informed him of its being uſed by his father and myſelf, in caſes of Hydrothorax, and that he has ever ſince mentioned it in his lectures, and ſometimes employed it in his practice.

At length, in the year 1783, it appeared in the new edition of the Edinburgh Pharmacopœia, into which, I am told, it was received in conſequence of the recommendation of Dr. Hope. But from which, I am ſatisfied, it will be again very ſoon rejected, if it ſhould continue to be exhibited in the unreſtrained manner in which it has heretofore been uſed at Edinburgh, and in the enormous doſes in which it is now directed in London.

In the following caſes the reader will find other diſeaſes beſides dropſies; particularly ſeveral caſes of conſumption. I was induced to try it in theſe, from being told, that it was much uſed in the Weſt of England, in the Phthiſis Pulmonalis, by the common people. In this diſeaſe, however, in my hands, it has done but little ſervice, and yet I am diſpoſed to wiſh it a further trial, for in a copy of Parkinſon's Herbal, which I ſaw about two years ago,

I found

I found the following manuſcript note at the article Digitalis, written, I believe, by a Mr. Saunders, who practiſed for many years with great reputation as a ſurgeon and apothecary at Stourbridge, in Worceſterſhire.

" Conſumptions are cured infallibly by weak de-
" coction of Foxglove leaves in water, or wine and
" water, and drank for conſtant drink. Or take of
" the juice of the herb and flowers, clarify it, and
" make a fine ſyrup with honey, of which take
" three ſpoonfuls thrice in a day, at phyſical hours.
" The uſe of theſe two things of late has done, in
" conſumptive caſes, great wonders. But be cautious
" of its uſe, for it is of a vomiting nature. In
" theſe things begin ſparingly, and increaſe the doſe
" as the patient's ſtrength will bear, leaſt, inſtead of
" a ſovereign medicine, you do real damage by this
" infuſion or ſyrup."

The precautions annexed to his encomiums of this medicine, lead one to think that he has ſpoken from his own proper experience.

I have lately been told, that a perſon in the neighbourhood of Warwick, poſſeſſes a famous family receipt for the dropſy, in which the Foxglove is the active medicine; and a lady from the weſtern part of Yorkſhire aſſures me, that the people in her country often cure themſelves of dropſical complaints by drinking Foxglove tea. In confirmation of this, I recollect about two years ago being deſired to viſit a travelling

travelling Yorkſhire tradeſman. I found him inceſſantly vomiting, his viſion indiſtinct, his pulſe forty in a minute. Upon enquiry it came out, that his wife had ſtewed a large handful of green Foxglove leaves in half a pint of water, and given him the liquor, which he drank at one draught, in order to cure him of an aſthmatic affection. This good woman knew the medicine of her country, but not the doſe of it, for her huſband narrowly eſcaped with his life.

It is probable that this rude mode of exhibiting the Foxglove has been more general than I am at preſent aware of; but it is wonderful that no author ſeems to have been acquainted with its effects as a diuretic.

CASES,

CASES,

In which the Digitalis was given by the Direction of the Author.

1775.

IT was in the courſe of this year that I began to uſe the Digitalis in dropſical caſes. The patients were ſuch as applied at my houſe for advice gratis. I cannot pretend to charge my memory with particular caſes, or particular effects, and I had not leiſure to make notes. Upon the whole, however, it may be concluded, that the medicine was found uſeful, or I ſhould not have continued to employ it.

CASE I.

December 8th. A man about fifty years of age, who had formerly been a builder, but was now much reduced in his circumſtances, complained to me of an aſthma which firſt attacked him about the latter end of autumn. His breath was very ſhort, his countenance was ſunken, his belly large; and, upon examination, a fluctuation in it was very perceptible. His urine for ſome time paſt had been ſmall in quantity. I directed a decoction of Fol. Digital. recent. which made him very ſick, the ſickneſs recurring at intervals for ſeveral days, during which time he made a large quantity of water. His breath gradually drew eaſier, his belly ſubſided, and in about

about ten days he began to eat with a keen appetite. He afterwards took ſteel and bitters.

1776.

CASE II.

January 14th. A poor man labouring under an aſcites and anaſarca, was directed to take a decoction of Digitalis every four hours. It purged him ſmartly, but did not relieve him. An opiate was now ordered with each doſe of the medicine, which then acted upon the kidneys very freely, and he ſoon loſt all his complaints.

CASE III.

March 15th. A poor boy, about nine years of age, was brought for my advice. His countenance was pale, his pulſe quick and feeble, his body greatly emaciated, except his belly, which was very large, and, upon examination, contained a fluid. The caſe had been conſidered as ariſing from worms. He was directed to take the decoction of Digitalis night and morning. It operated as a diuretic, never made him ſick, and he got well without any other medicine.

CASE IV.

July 25th. Mrs. H———, of A———, near N———, between forty and fifty years of age, a few weeks ago, after ſome previous indiſpoſition, was attacked by a ſevere cold ſhivering fit, ſucceeded by fever; great pain in her left ſide, ſhortneſs of breath, perpetual cough, and, after ſome days,

copious

copious expectoration. On the 4th of *June*, Dr. Darwin,* was called to her. I have not heard what was then done for her, but, between the 15th of *June*, and 25th of *July*, the Doctor, at his different visits, gave her various medicines of the deobstruent, tonic, antispasmodic, diuretic, and evacuant kinds.

On the 25th of *July* I was desired to meet Dr. Darwin at the lady's house. I found her nearly in a state of suffocation; her pulse extremely weak and irregular, her breath very short and laborious, her countenance sunk, her arms of a leaden colour, clammy and cold. She could not lye down in bed, and had neither strength nor appetite, but was extremely thirsty. Her stomach, legs, and thighs were greatly swollen; her urine very small in quantity, not more than a spoonful at a time, and that very seldom. It had been proposed to scarify her legs, but the proposition was not acceded to.

She had experienced no relief from any means that had been used, except from ipecacoanha vomits; the dose of which had been gradually increased from 15 to 40 grains, but such was the insensible state of her stomach for the last few days, that even those very large doses failed to make her sick, and consequently purged her. In this situation of things I knew of nothing likely to avail us, except the Digitalis: but this I hesitated to propose, from an apprehension that little could be expected from any thing; that an unfavourable termination would tend to discredit

* Then resident at Lichfield, now at Derby.

diſcredit a medicine which promiſed to be of great benefit to mankind, and I might be cenſured for a preſcription which could not be countenanced by the experience of any other regular practitioner. But theſe conſiderations ſoon gave way to the deſire of preſerving the life of this valuable woman, and accordingly I propoſed the Digitalis to be tried; adding, that I ſometimes had found it to ſucceed when other, even the moſt judicious methods, had failed. Dr. Darwin very politely, acceded immediately to my propoſition, and, as he had never ſeen it given, left the preparation and the doſe to my direction. We therefore preſcribed as follows:

R. Fol. Digital. purp. recent. ʒiv. coque ex
Aq. fontan. puræ ℔iſs ad ℔i. et cola.
R. Decoct. Digital. ʒiſs.
Aq. Nuc. Moſchat. ʒii. M. fiat. hauſt. 2dis horis ſumend.

The patient took five of theſe draughts, which made her very ſick, and acted very powerfully upon the kidneys, for within the firſt twenty-four hours ſhe made upwards of eight quarts of water. The ſenſe of fulneſs and oppreſſion acroſs her ſtomach was greatly diminiſhed, her breath was eaſed, her pulſe became more full and more regular, and the ſwellings of her legs ſubſided.

26th. Our patient being thus ſnatched from impending deſtruction, Dr. Darwin propoſed to give her a decoction of pareira brava and guiacum ſhavings,

ings, with pills of myrrh and white vitriol; and, if coſtive, a pill with calomel and aloes. To theſe propoſitions I gave a ready aſſent.

30th. This day Dr. Darwin ſaw her, and directed a continuation of the medicines laſt preſcribed.

Auguſt 1ſt. I found the patient perfectly free from every appearance of dropſy, her breath quite eaſy, her appetite much improved, but ſtill very weak. Having ſome ſuſpicion of a diſeaſed liver, I directed pills of ſoap, rhubarb, tartar of vitriol, and calomel to be taken twice a day, with a neutral ſaline draught.

9th. We viſited our patient together, and repeated the draughts directed on the 26th of *June*, with the addition of tincture of bark, and alſo ordered pills of aloes, guiacum, and ſal martis to be taken if coſtive.

September 10th. From this time the management of the caſe fell entirely under my direction, and perceiving ſymptoms of effuſion going forwards, I deſired that a ſolution of merc. ſubl. corr. might be given twice a day.

19th. The increaſe of the dropſical ſymptoms now made it neceſſary to repeat the Digitalis. The dried leaves were uſed in infuſion, and the water was preſently evacuated, as before.

It

It is now almoſt nine years ſince the Digitalis was firſt preſcribed for this lady, and notwithſtanding I have tried every preventive method I could deviſe, the dropſy ſtill continues to recur at times; but is never allowed to increaſe ſo as to cauſe much diſtreſs, for ſhe occaſionally takes the infuſion and relieves herſelf whenever ſhe chooſes. Since the firſt exhibition of that medicine, very ſmall doſes have been always found ſufficient to promote the flow of urine.

I have been more particular in the narrative of this caſe, partly becauſe Dr. Darwin has related it rather imperfectly in the notes to his ſon's poſthumous publication, truſting, I imagine, to memory, and partly becauſe it was a caſe which gave riſe to a very general uſe of the medicine in that part of Shropſhire.

CASE V.

December 10th. Mr. L———, Æt. 35. Aſcites and anaſarca, the conſequence of very intemperate living. After trying ſquill and other medicines to no purpoſe, I directed a decoction of the Fol. Digital. recent. ſix drams to a pint; an eighth part to be taken every fourth hour. This made him ſick, and produced a copious flow of urine, but not enough to remove all the dropſical ſymptoms. After a fortnight a ſtronger decoction was ordered, and, upon a third trial, as the winter advanced, it became neceſſary to uſe four ounces to the pint decoction; and thus he got free from all his complaints.

In

In *October* 1777, in consequence of having pursued his intemperate mode of living, his dropsy returned, accompanied by evident marks of diseased viscera. A decoction of two drams of Fol. Digital. siccat. to a pint, once more removed the dropsy. He took a wine glass full thrice a day.

In *January* 1778, I was desired to visit him again. I found he had gone on in his usual intemperate life, his countenance jaundiced, and the dropsy coming on apace. After giving some deobstruent medicines, I again directed the Digitalis, which again emptied the water; but he did not survive many weeks.

1777.

CASE VI.

February —. Mrs. M———, Æt. 45. Ascites and anasarca, but not much otherwise diseased, and well enough to walk about the house, and see after her family affairs. I thought this a fair case for a trial of the Digitalis, and therefore directed a decoction of the fresh leaves, the stock of dried ones being exhausted. About a week afterwards, calling to see my patient, I was informed that she was dead; that the third day after my first visit she suddenly fell down, and expired. Upon enquiry I found she had not taken any of the medicine; for the snow had lain so deep upon the ground, that the apothecary had not been able to procure it. Had

the medicine been given in a cafe ſeemingly ſo favourable as this, and had the patient died under its uſe, is it not probable that the death would have been attributed to it?

CASE VII.

February 11th. Mr. E——, of W——, Æt. 61. Hydrothorax, aſcites and anaſarca, conſequences of hard drinking. He had been attended for ſome time by a phyſician in his neighbourhood, who had treated his caſe with the uſual remedies, but without affording him any relief; nor could I expect to ſucceed better by any other medicine than the Digitalis. The dried leaves were not to be had; and the green ones at this ſeaſon being very uncertain in their ſtrength, I ordered four ounces of the roots in a pint decoction, and directed three ſpoonfuls to be given every fourth hour, until it either excited naufea, or a free diſcharge of urine; both theſe effects took place nearly at the ſame time: he made a large quantity of water, the ſwellings ſubſided very conſiderably, and his breath became eaſy. Eight days afterwards he began upon a courſe of bitters and deobſtruents. The dropſical ſymptoms ſoon increaſed again, but he had ſuffered ſo much from the ſeverity of the ſickneſs before, that he was neither willing to take, nor I to give the ſame medicine again.

Perhaps this patient might have been ſaved, if I had been well acquainted with the management and

real

real doſes of the medicine, which was certainly in this inſtance made very much too ſtrong; and notwithſtanding the caution to ſtop the further exhibition when certain effects ſhould take place, it ſeems the quantity previouſly ſwallowed was ſufficient to diſtreſs him exceedingly.

CASE VIII.

March 11th. Mrs. H———, Æt. 32. A few days after a tedious labour, had her legs and thighs ſwelled to a very great degree; pale and ſemi-tranſparent,* with pain in both groins. After a purge of calomel and rhubarb, ung. merc. was ordered to be rubbed upon the groins, and the following decoction was directed:

R. Fol. Digital. purp. recent. ʒii.
Aq. puræ. ℔i. coque ad ℔iſs et colatur. adde.
Aq. cinn. ſp. ʒiv. M. capiat. cyath. vinos. parv. bis quotidie.

The decoction preſently increaſed the ſecretion of urine, and abated the diſtenſion of the legs: in a fortnight the ſwelling was gone; but ſome days after leaving her bed, her legs ſwelled again about the ancles, which was removed by another bottle of the decoction on the 21ſt of *April*.

* This diſeaſe has lately been well deſcribed by Mr. White, of Mancheſter.

CASE IX.

March 29th. Mr. G———, Æt. 47. Very much deformed; asthma of several years continuance, but now dropsical to a great degree. Took several medicines without relief, and then tried the Digitalis, but with no better success.

CASE X.

April 10th. G—G——, Æt. 70. Asthma and anasarca. Took a decoction of the fresh leaves of the Digitalis, which produced violent sickness, but no immediate evacuation of water. After the sickness had ceased altogether, the urine began to flow copiously, and he was cured.

CASE XI.

July 10th. Mr. M—— of T——, Æt. 54. A very hard drinker; had been affected since *November* last with ascites and anasarca, for which he had taken several medicines without benefit. A decoction of the recent leaves of the Digitalis was then directed, an ounce and half to a pint, one eighth of which I ordered to be given every fourth hour. A few doses brought on great nausea, indistinct vision, and a great flow of urine, so as presently to empty him of all the dropsical water. Indeed the evacuation was so rapid and so complete, that it became necessary to apply a bandage round the belly, and to support him with cordials.

In

In something more than a year and a half, his dropsy returned, but the Digitalis did not then succeed to our wishes. In *August*, 1779, he was tapped, and lived afterwards only about five weeks.

For more particulars, see the extract of a letter from Mr. Lyon.

CASE XII.

September 12th. Miss C—— of T——, Æt. 48. An ovarium dropsy, and anasarcous legs and thighs. For three months in the beginning of this year she had been under the care of Dr. Darwin, who at different times had given her blue vitriol, elaterium, and calomel; decoction of pareira brava, and guiacum wood, with tincture of cantharides; oxymel of squills, decoction of parsley roots, &c. Finding no relief, she discontinued the use of medicines, until the urgency of her symptoms induced her to ask my advice about the end of *August*. She was greatly emaciated, and had almost a total loss of appetite. I first tried small doses of Merc. sublim. corr. in solution, with decoction of burdock roots, and blisters to the thighs. No advantage attending the use of this plan, I directed a decoction of Fol. Digit. a dram and half to a pint; one ounce to be taken twice a day. It presently reduced the anasarcous swellings, but made no alteration in the distension of the abdomen.

CASE XIII.

October 9th. Mrs. B———, Æt. 40. An ovarium dropsy. Took a decoction of Digitalis without effect. Her life was preserved for some years by repeated tapping.

1778.

CASE XIV.

February 8th. Mr. R——— of K———. Had formerly suffered much from gout, and lived very intemperately. Jaundiced countenance; ascites; legs and thighs greatly swollen; appetite none; extremely weak; confined to his bed. Had taken many medicines from his apothecary without advantage. I ordered him decoction of Digitalis, and a cordial; but he survived only a few days.

CASE XV.

March 13th. Mr. M———, Æt. 54. A thorax greatly deformed; asthma through the winter, succeeded by dropsy in belly and legs. Pulse very small; face leaden coloured; cough almost continual. Decoction of seneka was directed, and small doses of Dover's powder at night.

17th. Gum-ammoniac and squill, with elixir paregor. at night.—26th, Squill and decoction of seneka.—30th, His complaints still increasing, decoction

coction of Digitalis was then directed, which relieved him in a few days; but his complaints returned again, and he died in the month of *June*.

CASE XVI.

Auguſt 18th. Mr. B——, Æt. 33. Pulmonary conſumption and dropſy. The Digitalis, and that failing, other diuretics were uſed, in hopes of gaining ſome relief from the diſtreſs occaſioned by the dropſical ſymptoms; but none of them were effectual. He was then attended by another phyſician, and died in about two months.

CASE XVII.

September 21ſt. Mrs. M—— W—— G——, Æt. 50. An ovarium dropſy. She took half a pint of Infuſ. Digitalis, which made her ſick, but did not increaſe the quantity of urine. She was afterwards relieved by tapping.

CASE XVIII.

October 28th. R—— W——, Æt. 33. Aſcites and univerſal anaſarca; countenance quite pale and bloated; appetite none, and the little food he forces down is generally rejected.

R. Fol. Digit. purp. ſiccat. ʒiii.

Aq. bull. ℔i. digere per horas duas, et colat. adde aq. junip. comp. ʒiii.

He

He was directed to take one ounce of this infuſion every two hours until it ſhould make him ſick. This was on Wedneſday. The fifth doſe made him vomit. On Thurſday afternoon he vomited again very freely, without having taken any more of the medicine. On Friday and Saturday he made more water than he had done for a week before, and the ſwellings of his face and body were conſiderably abated. He was directed to omit all medicine ſo long as the urine continued to flow freely, and alſo to keep an account of the quantity he made in twenty-four hours.

Theſe were his reports:

October	31ſt.	Saturday,	5 half pints.
November	1ſt.	Sunday,	6
	2d.	Monday,	8
	3d.	Tueſday,	8
	4th.	Wedneſday,	7
	5th.	Thurſday,	8

On Wedneſday he began to purge, and the purging ſtill continues, but his appetite is better than he has known it for a long time. No ſwelling remains but about his ancles, extending at night half way up his legs.

Omit all medicines at preſent.

	7th.	Saturday,	$7\frac{1}{2}$ half pints.
	8th.	Sunday,	8
	9th.	Monday,	$6\frac{3}{4}$
	10th.	Tueſday,	$6\frac{1}{2}$
	11th.	Wedneſday,	6
	12th.	Thurſday,	$6\frac{1}{4}$

On

On Tuesday the 17th, some swelling still remained about his ancles, but he was in every other respect perfectly well.

He took a few more doses of the infusion, and no other medicine.

CASE XIX.

December 8th. W—— B——, Æt. 60. A hard drinker. Diseased viscera; ascites and anasarca. An infusion of Digitalis was directed, but it had no other effect than to make him sick.

1779.

In the beginning of this year we had many dropsies in children, who had suffered from the Scarlatina Anginosa; they all yielded very readily to the Digitalis, but in some the medicine purged, and then it did not prove diuretic, nor did it remove the dropsy until opium was joined with it, so as to prevent it purging.——I did not keep notes of these cases, but I do not recollect a single instance in which the Digitalis failed to effect a cure.

CASE XX.

January 1st. Mr. H———. Hydrops Pectoris; legs and thighs prodigiously anasarcous; a very distressing sense of fulness and tightness across his stomach; urine in small quantity; pulse intermitting; breath very short.

He

He had taken various medicines, and been bliſtered, but without relief. His complaints continuing to increaſe, I directed an infuſion of Digitalis, which made him very ſick; acted powerfully as a diuretic, and removed all his ſymptoms.

About three months afterwards he was out upon a journey, and, after taking cold, was ſuddenly ſeized with difficulty of breathing, and violent palpitation of his heart: he ſent for me, and I ordered the infuſion as before, which very ſoon removed his complaints. He is now active and well; but, whenever he takes cold, finds ſome return of difficult breathing, which he ſoon removes by a doſe or two of the infuſion.

CASE XXI.

January 5th. Mrs. M——, Æt. 69. Hydrothorax, (called aſthma) aſcites and anaſarca. I directed an infuſion of Fol. Digital. ſiccat. three drams to a pint; a ſmall wine glaſs to be taken every third or fourth hour. It made her violently ſick, acted powerfully as a diuretic, ſet her breath perfectly at liberty, and carried off the ſwelling of her legs; when ſhe was nearly emptied, ſhe became ſo languid, that I thought it neceſſary to order cordials, and a large bliſter to her back. Mr. Ward, who attended as her apothecary, tells me ſhe had ſome return of her aſthma in *June* and *October* following, which was each time removed by the ſame medicine.

CASE

CASE XXII.

January 11th. Mr. H———, Æt. 59. Aſcites and general anaſarca. A large corpulent man, and a hard drinker: he had repeatedly ſuffered under complaints of this kind, but had been always relieved by the judicious aſſiſtance of Dr. Aſh. In the preſent inſtance, however, not finding relief as uſual from the preſcriptions of my worthy friend, he ſent for me; after examining into his ſituation, and informing myſelf what had been done to relieve him, I was ſatisfied that the Digitalis was the only medicine from which I had any thing to hope. It was therefore directed; but another patient requiring my aſſiſtance at a diſtance from town, I deſired he would not begin the medicine before I returned, which would be early on the third day; for I was well aware of the difficulties before me, and that he would inevitably ſink under too rapid an evacuation of the water. On my return I was informed, that the preceding evening, as he ſat on his chair, his head ſunk upon his breaſt, and he died.

This caſe, as well as caſe VI. is mentioned with a view to demonſtrate to younger practitioners, how ſudden and unexpected the deaths of dropſical patients ſometimes happen, and how cautious we ſhould be in aſſigning cauſes for effects.

CASE XXIII.

Auguſt 31ſt. Mr. C———, Æt. 57. Diſeaſed viſcera, jaundice, aſcites and anaſarca. After trying

ing calomel, saline draughts, jallap purges, chrystals of tartar, pills of gum ammoniac, squills, and soap, sal succini, eleterium, &c. infusion of Digitalis was directed, which removed all his urgent symptoms, and he recovered a pretty good state of health.

CASE XXIV.

September 11th. I was desired to visit Mr. L——, Æt. 63; a middle sized man; rather thin; not habitually intemperate; found him in bed, where he had been for three days. He was in a state of furious insanity, and had been gradually losing his reason for ten days before, but was not outrageous the first week: his apothecary had given him ten grains of emetic tartar, a dram of ipecacoanha, and an ounce of tincture of jallap, in the space of a few hours, which scarcely made him sick, and only occasioned a stool or two; upon enquiring into the usual state of his health, I was told that he had been troubled with some difficulty of breathing for thirty years past, but for the nine last years this complaint had increased, so that he was often obliged to sit up the greater part of the night; and, for the last year, the sense of suffocation was so great, when he lay down, that he often sat up for a week together. His father died of an asthma before he was fifty. A few years ago, at an election, where he drank more than usual, his head was affected as now, but in a slighter degree, and his asthmatic symptoms vanished; and now, notwithstanding he has been several days

days in bed, he feels not the leaſt difficulty in breathing.

Apprehending that the infanity might be owing to the ſame cauſe which had heretofore occaſioned the aſthma, and that this cauſe was water; I ordered a decoction of the Fol. ſiccat Digital. three drams to half a pint; three ſpoonfuls to be taken every third hour: the fourth doſe made him ſick; the medicine was then ſtopped; the ſickneſs continued at intervals, more or leſs, for four days, during which time he made a great quantity of water, and gradually became more rational. On the fifth day his appetite began to return, and the ſickneſs ceaſed, but the flow of urine ſtill continued.

A week afterwards I ſaw him again, and examined him particularly; his head was then perfectly rational, apetite very good, breath quite eaſy, permitting him to lie down in bed without inconvenience, makes plenty of water, coughs a little, and expectorates freely. He took no other medicine, except a little rhubarb when coſtive.

CASE XXV.

September 15th. Mr. J. R——, Æt. 50. Subject to an aſthmatical complaint for more than twenty years, but was this year much worſe than uſual, and ſymptoms of dropſy appeared. In *July* he took G. ammon. ſquill and ſeneka, with infuſ. amarum and foſſil alkaly. In *Auguſt*, infuſum amar. with

with vin. chalyb. and at bed-time pil. ſtyr. and ſquill. His complaints increaſing, the ſquill was puſhed as far as could be borne, but without any good effect. *September* 15th, an infuſion of Digitalis was directed, but he died the next morning.

CASE XXVI.

September 18th. Mrs. R——, Æt. 30. After a ſevere child-bearing, found both her legs and thighs ſwelled to the utmoſt ſtretch of the ſkin. They looked pale, and almoſt tranſparent. The caſe being ſimilar to that related at No. VIII. I determined upon a ſimilar method of treatment; but as this patient had an inflammatory ſore throat alſo, I wiſhed to get that removed firſt, and in three or four days it was done. I then directed an infuſion of Digitalis, which ſoon increaſed the urinary ſecretion, and reduced the ſwellings, without any diſturbance of her ſtomach.

A few days after quitting her bed and coming down ſtairs, ſome degree of ſwelling in her legs returned, which was removed by calomel, an opening electuary, and the application of rollers.

CASE XXVII.

October 7th. Mr. F——, a little man, with a ſpine and thorax greatly deformed; for more than a year paſt had complained of difficult reſpiration, and a ſenſe of fulneſs about his ſtomach; theſe complaints increaſing, his abdomen gradually enlarged, and

and a fluctuation in it became perceptible. He had no anaſarca, no appearance of diſeaſed viſcera, and no great paucity of urine. Purges and diuretics of different kinds affording him no relief, my aſſiſtance was deſired. After trying ſquill medicines without effect, he was ordered to take Pulv. fol. Digital. in ſmall doſes. Theſe producing no ſenſible effect, the doſes were gradually increaſed until naufea was excited; but there was no alteration in the quantity of urine, and conſequently no relief to his complaints. I then adviſed tapping, but he would not hear of it; however, the diſtreſs occaſioned by the increaſing fulneſs of his belly at length compelled him to ſubmit to the operation on the 20th of *November*. It was neceſſary to draw off the water again upon the following days:

December the 8th.
— — 27th.
1780. *February* the 4th.
— — 23d.
March the 9th.

During the intervals, no method I could think of was omitted to prevent the return of the diſeaſe, but nothing ſeemed to avail. In the operation of *February* 23d, his ſtrength was ſo much reduced, that the water was not entirely removed; and on the 9th of March, before his belly was half emptied, notwithſtanding the moſt judicious application of bandage, his debility was ſo great, that it was judged prudent to ſtop. After being placed in bed, the faintneſs and ſickneſs continued; ſevere rigors enſued,

enſued, and violent vomiting; theſe vomitings continued through the night, and in the intervals he lay in a ſtate nearly approaching to ſyncope. The next day I found him with nearly the ſame ſymptoms, but remarked that the quantity of fluid he had thrown up was very much more than what he had taken, and that his abdomen was conſiderably fallen; in the courſe of two or three days more, he diſcharged the whole of the effuſed fluid; his ſtrength and appetite gradually returned, and he was in all reſpects much better than he had been before the laſt operation.

Some time afterwards, his belly began to fill again, and he again applied to me; upon an accurate examination, I judged the quantity of fluid might then be about four or five quarts. Nature had pointed out the true method of cure in this caſe; I therefore ordered him to bed, and directed ipecacoanha vomits to be given night and morning: in two or three days the whole of the water was removed by vomiting, for he never purged, nor was the quantity of his urine increaſed; his appetite and ſtrength gradually returned; he never had any further relapſe, and is now an active healthy man. I muſt leave the reader to make his own reflections on this ſingular caſe.

CASE

1780.

CASE XXVIII.

January 11th. Captain V——, Æt. 42. Had ſuffered much from reſiding in hot climates, and drinking very freely, particularly rum in large quantity. He had tried many phyſicians before I ſaw him, but nothing relieved him. I found him greatly emaciated, his countenance of a browniſh yellow; no appetite, extremely low, diſtreſſing fulneſs acroſs his ſtomach; legs and thighs greatly ſwollen; pulſe quick, and very feeble; urine in ſmall quantity. As he had evidently only a few days to live, I ordered him nothing but a ſolution of ſal diureticus in cinnamon water, ſlightly acidulated with ſyrup of lemons. This medicine effecting no change, and his ſymptoms becoming daily more diſtreſſing, I directed an infuſion of Digitalis. A few doſes occaſioned a copious flow of urine, without ſickneſs or any other diſturbance. The medicine was diſcontinued; and the next day the urine continuing to be ſecreted very plentifully, he loſt his moſt diſtreſſing complaints, was in great ſpirits, and ate a pretty good dinner. In the evening, as he was converſing chearfully with ſome friends, he ſtooped forwards, fell from his chair, and died inſtantly. Had he been in bed, I think there is reaſon to believe this fatal ſyncope, if ſuch it was, would not have happened.

CASE XXIX.

February 6th. Mr. H——, Æt. 63. A corpulent man; had ſuffered much from gout, which for the laſt year or two had formed very imperfectly. He had now ſymptoms of water in his cheſt, his belly and his legs. An infuſion of Digitalis removed theſe complaints, and after being confined for the greater part of the winter, he was well enough to get abroad again. In the courſe of a month the dropſical ſymptoms returned, and were again removed by the ſame medicine. Bitters and tonics were now occaſionally preſcribed, but his debility gradually increaſed, and he died ſome time afterwards; but the dropſy never returned.

CASE XXX.

February 17th. Mr. D——, Æt. 50. Aſcites and anaſarca, with ſymptoms of phthiſis. He had been a very hard drinker. The infuſum Digitalis removed his dropſical ſymptoms, and he was ſufficiently recovered to take a journey; but as the ſpring advanced, the conſumptive ſymptoms increaſed, and he died ſoon afterwards, perfectly emaciated.

CASE XXXI.

March 5th. I was deſired to viſit Mrs. H——, a very delicate woman, who after a ſevere lying-in, had her legs and thighs ſwollen to a very great degree;

gree; pale and ſemi-tranſparent. I found her extremely faint, her pulſe very ſmall and ſlow; vomiting violently, and frequently purging. She was attended by a gentleman who had ſeen me give the Digitalis in a ſimilar caſe of ſwelled legs after a lying-in (ſee Caſe XXVI.) about ſix months before. He had not conſidered that this patient was delicate, the other robuſt; nor had he attended to ſtop the exhibition of the medicine when its effects began to take place. The great diſtreſs of her ſituation was evidently owing to the imprudent and unlimited uſe of the Digitalis. I was very apprehenſive for her ſafety; ordered her cordials and volatiles; a free ſupply of wine, chamomile tea with brandy for common drink, and bliſters. The next day the ſituation of things was much the ſame, but with all this diſturbance no increaſed ſecretion of urine. The ſame methods were continued; an opiate ordered at night, and liniment. volatile upon flannel applied to the groins, as ſhe now complained of great pain in thoſe parts. The third day the nauſea was leſs urgent, the vomitings leſs frequent, the pulſe not ſo ſlow. Camphorated ſpirit, with cauſtic volatile alkaly, was applied to the ſtomach, emulſion given for common drink, and the ſame medicines repeated. From this time, the intervals became gradually longer between the fits of vomiting, the flow of urine increaſed, the ſwellings ſubſided, the appetite returned, and ſhe recovered perfectly.

CASE XXXII.

March 16th. Mr. D——, Æt. 70. A paralytic ſtroke had for ſome weeks paſt impaired the uſe of his left ſide, and he complained much of his breath, and of a ſtraitneſs acroſs his ſtomach; at length, an anaſarca and aſcites appearing, I had no doubt as to the cauſe of the former ſymptoms; but, upon account of his advanced age, and the paralytic affection, I heſitated to give the Digitalis, and therefore tried the other uſual modes of practice, until at length his breath would not permit him to lie down in bed, and his other ſymptoms increaſed ſo rapidly as to threaten a ſpeedy diſſolution. In this dilemma I ventured to preſcribe an infuſion of the Fol. ſiccat. Digital. which preſently excited a copious flow of urine, and made him very ſick; a ſtrong infuſion of chamomile flowers, with brandy, relieved the ſickneſs, but the diuretic effects of the Digitalis continuing, his dropſy was removed, and his breathing became eaſy. The palſy remained nearly in the ſame ſtate. He lived until *Auguſt* 1782, and without any return of the dropſy.

CASE XXXIII.

March 18th. Miſs S——, Æt. 5. Hydrocephalus internus. As the caſe did not yield to calomel, when matters were nearly advanced to extremities, it occurred to me to try the Infuſum Digitalis; a few doſes of which were given, but had no ſenſible effect.

CASE

CASE XXXIV.

March 19th. A young lady, ſoon after the birth of an illegitimate child, became inſane. After being near a month under my care, ſwellings of her legs, which at firſt had been attributed to weakneſs, extended to her thighs and belly; her urine became foul, and ſmall in quantity, and the inſanity remained nearly the ſame. As it had been very difficult to procure evacuations by any means, I ordered half an ounce of Fol. Digital. ſiccat. in a pint infuſion, and directed two ſpoonfuls to be given every two hours: this had the deſired effect; the dropſy and the inſanity diſappeared together, and ſhe had afterwards no other medicine but ſome aperient pills to take occaſionally.

CASE XXXV.

April 12th. Mr. R——, Æt. 32. For the laſt three or four years had had more or leſs of what was conſidered as aſthma;—it appeared to me Hydrothorax. I directed an infuſion of Digitalis, which preſently removed his complaints. In *June* following he had a relapſe, and took two grains of the Pulv. fol. Digit. three times a day, which cured him after taking forty grains, and he has never had a return.

CASE XXXVI.

May 15th. Mrs. H——, Æt. 40. A ſpaſmodic aſthma, attended with ſymptoms of effuſion. An infuſion of Digitalis relieved her very conſiderably, and ſhe lived four years afterwards without any relapſe.

CASE XXXVII.

May 26th. R—— B——, Æt. 12. Scrophulous, conſumptive, and at length anaſarcous. Took Infuſ. Digital. without advantage. Died the *July* following.

CASE XXXVIII.

June 4th. Mrs. S——, of W———, Æt 49. Aſcites and anaſarca. Had taken many medicines; firſt from her apothecary, afterwards by the direction of a very judicious and very celebrated phyſician, but nothing retarded the increaſe of the dropſy. I firſt ſaw her along with the phyſician mentioned above, on the 14th of *May;* we directed an electuary of chryſtals of tartar, and Seltzer water for common drink; this plan failing, as others had done before, we ordered the Infuſ. Digital. which in a few days nearly removed the dropſy. I then left her to the care of her phyſician; but her conſtitution was too much impaired to admit of reſtoration to health, and I underſtand ſhe died a few weeks afterwards.

CASE

CASE XXXIX.

June 13th. Mr. P———, Æt. 35. A very hard drinker, was attacked with a ſevere hæmoptoe, which was followed by aſcites and anaſarca. He had every appearance of diſeaſed viſcera, and his urine was ſmall in quantity. The powder and the infuſion of Digitalis were given at different times, but without the deſired effect. Other medicines were tried, but in vain. Tapping prolonged his exiſtence a few weeks, and he died early in the following autumn.

CASE XL.

June 27th. Mr. W——, Æt. 37. An apparently aſthmatic affection, gradually increaſing for three or four years, which not yielding to the uſual remedies, he took the infuſion of Digitalis. Two or three doſes made him very ſick; but he thought his breathing relieved. After one week he took it again, and was ſo much better as to want no other medicine.

In the courſe of the following winter he became hectic, and died conſumptive about a year afterwards.

CASE XLI.

July 6th. Mr. E——, Æt. 57. Hydrothorax and anaſarca; his breath ſo ſhort that he could not lie

lie down. After a trial of ſquill, fixed alkaly, and dulcified ſpirit of nitre, I directed Pulv. Digital. gr. 2, thrice a day. In four days he was able to come down ſtairs; in three days more no appearance of diſeaſe remained; and under the uſe of aromatics and ſmall doſes of opium, he ſoon recovered his ſtrength.

CASE XLII.

July 7th. Miſs H—— of T——, Æt. 39. In the laſt ſtage of a phthiſis pulmonalis became dropſical. She took the Digitalis without being relieved.

CASE XLIII.

July 9th. Mrs. F———, Æt. 70. A chearful, ſtrong, healthy woman; but for a few years back had experienced a degree of difficult breathing when in exerciſe. In the courſe of the laſt year her legs ſwelled, and ſhe felt great fulneſs about her ſtomach. Theſe ſymptoms continued increaſing very faſt, notwithſtanding ſeveral attempts made by a very judicious apothecary to relieve her. The more regular practitioner failing, ſhe had recourſe to a quack, who I believe plied her very powerfully with Daphne laureola, or ſome draſtic purge of that kind. I found her greatly reduced in ſtrength, her belly and lower extremities ſwollen to an amazing ſize, her urine ſmall in quantity, and her appetite greatly impaired. For the firſt fortnight of my attendance bliſters were applied, ſolution of fixed alkaly, decoction of ſeneka with vitriolic æther, chryſtals

chryſtals of tartar, ſquill and cordial medicines were ſucceſſively exhibited, but with no advantage. I then directed Pulv. Fol. Digital. two grains every four hours. After taking eighteen grains, the urine began to increaſe. The medicine was then ſtopped. The diſcharge of urine continued to increaſe, and in five or ſix days the whole of the dropſical water paſſed off, without any diſturbance to the ſtomach or bowels. As the diſtenſion of the belly had been very great, a ſwathe was applied, and drawn gradually tighter as the water was evacuated. As no pains were ſpared to prevent the return of the dropſy, and as the beſt means I could deviſe proved unequal to my wiſhes, both in this and in ſome other caſes, I ſhall take the liberty to point out the methods I tried at different times in as conciſe a manner as poſſible, for the knowledge of what will not do, may ſometimes aſſiſt us to diſcover what will.

1780.

July 18th. Infuſum amarum, ſteel, Seltzer water.

September 22d. Neutral ſaline draughts, with tinct. canthar.

26th. Pills of ſoap, garlic and millepedes.

30th. The ſame pills, with infuſum amarum.

October 11th. Pills of aloes, aſſafetida, and ſal martis, in the day-time, and mercury rubbed down, at night.

December 21ſt. The accumulation of water now required a repetition of the Digitalis. It was directed in infuſion, a dram and half to eight ounces, and an ounce and half given every fourth hour, until

until its effects began to appear. The water was soon carried off.

30th. Sal diuretic. twice a day. To eat preserved garlic frequently.

1781.

February 1st. Pills of calomel, squill and gum ammoniac.

3d. Infusion of Digitalis repeated, and after the water was carried off, Dover's powder was tried as a sudorific.

March 18th. Infus. Digital. repeated.

26th. Pills of sal martis and aromatic species, with infusum amarum.

May 5th. Being feverish; James's powder and saline draughts.

10th. Laudanum every night, and an opening tincture to obviate costiveness.

24th. Infus. Digitalis, one ounce only every fourth hour, which soon procured a perfect evacuation of the water.

August 11th. Infus. Digitalis.

October 19th. An emetic, and sol. Cicut. pulv. ten grains every six hours.

November 8th. A mercurial bolus at bed-time.

16th. Infus. Digitalis.

December 23d. An emetic—Pills of seneka and gum ammoniac—Vitriolic acid in every thing she drinks.

25th. Squill united to small doses of opium.

1782.

January 2d. A troublesome cough—Syrup of garlic and oxymel of squills. A blister to the back.

4th. Tincture

4th. Tincture of cantharides and paregoric elixir.
28th. Infuſ. Digitalis, half an ounce every morning, and one ounce every night, was now ſufficient to empty her.
March 26th. Infuſ. Digitalis; and when emptied, vitriol of copper twice a day.
April 1ſt. A cordial mixture for occaſional uſe.
Two months afterwards a purging came on, which every now and then returned, inducing great weakneſs—her appetite failed, and ſhe died in in *July*.

INTERVALS.

From *July* 9th, 1780, to *December* 21ſt, 171 days.
From *December* 21ſt to *February* 3d, 1781, 34 days.
From *February* 3d to *March* 18th, 44 days.
From *March* 18th to *May* 24th, 66 days.
From *May* 24th to *Auguſt* 11th, 79 days.
From *Auguſt* 11th to *November* 16th, 98 days.
From *November* 16th to *January* 28th, 1782, 74 days.
From *January* 28th to *March* 26th, 57 days.

None of the accumulations of water were at all equal to that which exiſted when I firſt ſaw her, for finding ſo eaſy a mode of relief, ſhe became impatient under a ſmall degree of preſſure, and often inſiſted upon taking her medicine ſooner than I thought it neceſſary. After the 26th of *March* the degree of effuſion was inconſiderable, and at the time of her death very trifling, being probably carried off by the diarrhœa.

CASE

CASE XLIV.

July 12th. Mr. H——, of A——, Æt. 60. In the laſt ſtage of a life hurried to a termination by free living, dropſical ſymptoms became the moſt diſtreſſing. He wiſhed to take the Digitalis. It was given, but afforded no relief.

CASE XLV.

July 13th. Mr. S——, Æt. 49. Aſthma, or rather hydrothorax, anaſarca, and ſymptoms of a diſeaſed liver. He was directed to take two grains of Pulv. fol. Digital. every two hours, until it produced ſome effect. It ſoon removed the dropſical and aſthmatic affections, and ſteel, with Seltzer water, reſtored him to health.

CASE XLVI.

Auguſt 6th. Mr. L——, Æt. 35. Aſcites and anaſarca. Pulv. Digital. grains three, repeated every fourth hour, until he had taken two ſcruples, removed every appearance of dropſy in a few days. He was then directed to take ſolution of merc. ſublimat. and ſoon recovered his health and ſtrength.

CASE XLVII.

Auguſt 16th. Mr. G——, of W——, Æt. 86. Aſthma of many years duration, and lately an incipient anaſarca, with a paucity of urine. He had never lived intemperately, was of a chearful diſpoſition, and very ſenſible: for ſome years back had loſt

loſt all reliſh for animal food, and his only ſupport had been an ounce or two of bread and cheeſe, or a ſmall ſlice of ſeed-cake, with three or four pints of mild ale, in the twenty-four hours. After trying chryſtals of tartar, fixed alkaly, ſquills, &c. I directed three grains of Pulv. fol. Digital. made into pills, with G. ammoniac, to be given every ſix hours; this preſently occaſioned copious diſcharges of urine, removed his ſwellings, and reſtored him to his uſual ſtandard of health.

CASE XLVIII.

Auguſt 17th. T—— B——, Eſq. of K——, Æt. 46. Jaundice, dropſy, and great hardneſs in the region of the liver. Infuſion of Digitalis carried off all the effuſion, and afterwards a courſe of deobſtruent and tonic medicines removed his other complaints.

CASE XLIX.

Auguſt 23d. Mr. C——, Æt. 58. (The perſon mentioned at Caſe XXIII.) He had continued free from dropſy until within the laſt ſix weeks; his appetite was now totally gone, his ſtrength extremely reduced, and the yellow of his jaundice changed to a blackiſh hue. The Digitalis was now tried in vain, and he died ſhortly afterwards.

CASE L.

Auguſt 24th. Mrs. W——, Æt. 39. Anaſarcous legs and ſymptoms of hydrothorax, conſequent

to

to a tertian ague. Three grains of Pulv. Digitalis, given every fourth hour, occaſioned a very copious flow of urine, and ſhe got well without any other medicine.

CASE LI.

Auguſt 28th. Mr. J—— H——, Æt. 27. In conſequence of very free living, had an aſcites and ſwelled legs. I ordered him to take two grains of Fol. Digital. pulv. every two hours, until it produced ſome effect; a few doſes cauſed a plentiful ſecretion of urine, but no ſickneſs, or purging: in ſix days the ſwellings diſappeared, and he has ſince remained in good health.

CASE LII.

September 27th. Mr. S——, Æt. 45. Had been long in an ill ſtate of health, from what had been ſuppoſed an irregular gout, was greatly emaciated, had a ſallow complexion, no appetite, coſtive bowels, quick and feeble pulſe. The cauſe of his complaints was involved in obſcurity; but I ſuſpected the poiſon of lead, and was ſtrengthened in this ſuſpicion, upon finding his wife had likewiſe ill health, and, at times, ſevere attacks of colic; but the anſwers to my enquiries ſeemed to prove my ſuſpicions fruitleſs, and, amongſt other things, I was told the pump was of wood. He had lately ſuffered extremely from difficult breathing, which I thought owing to anaſarcous lungs; there was alſo a ſlight degree of pale ſwelling in his legs. Pulv. fol.

fol. Digital. made into pills, with gum ammoniac and aromatic ſpecies, ſoon relieved his breathing. Attempts were then made to aſſiſt him in other reſpects, but with little good effect, and ſome months afterwards he died, with every appearance of a worn out conſtitution.

About two years after this gentleman's death, I was talking to a pump-maker, who, in the courſe of converſation, mentioned the corroſion of leaden pumps, by ſome of the water in this town, and inſtanced that at the houſe of Mr. S——, which he had replaced with a wooden one about three years before. The lead, he ſaid, was eaten away, ſo as to be very thin in ſome places, and full of holes in others;—this accidental information explained the myſtery.

The deleterious effects of lead ſeem to be conſiderably modified by the conſtitution of the patient; for in ſome families only one or two individuals ſhall ſuffer from it, whilſt the reſt receive it with impunity. In the ſpring of the year 1776, I was deſired to viſit Mrs. H——, of S—— Park, who had repeatedly been attacked with painful colics, and had ſuffered much from inſuperable coſtiveneſs; I ſuſpected lead to be the cauſe of her complaints, but was unable to trace by what means it was taken. She was relieved by the uſual methods; but, a few months afterwards, I was deſired to ſee her again: her ſufferings were the ſame as before, and notwithſtanding every precaution to guard againſt coſtiveneſs, ſhe was never in perfect health, and ſeldom

eſcaped

escaped severe attacks twice or thrice in a year; she had also frequent pains in her joints. I could not find any traces of similar complaints either in Mr. H——, the children, or the servants. Mrs. H—— was a water drinker, and seldom tasted any fermented liquor. The pump was of wood, as I had been informed upon my first visit. Her health continued nearly in the same state for two or three years more, but she always found herself better if she left her own house for any length of time. At length it occurred to me, that though the pump was a wooden one, the piston might work in lead. I therefore ordered the pump rods to be drawn up, and upon examination with a magnifying glass, found the leather of the piston covered with an infinite number of very minute shining particles of lead. Perhaps in this instance the metal was so minutely divided by abrasion, as to be mechanically suspended in the water. The lady was directed to drink the water of a spring, and never to swallow that from the pump. The event confirmed my suspicions, for she gradually recovered a good state of health, lost the obstinate costiveness, and has never to this day had any attack of the colic.

CASE LIII.

September 28th. Mrs. J——, Æt. 70. Ascites and very thick anasarcous legs and thighs, total loss of strength and appetite. Infusion of Digitalis was given, but, as had been prognosticated, with no good effect.

CASE

CASE LIV.

September 30th. Mr. A——, Æt. 57. A ſtrong man; hydrothorax and ſwelled legs; in other reſpects not unhealthful. He was directed to take two grains of the Pulv. fol. Digit. made into a pill with gum ammoniac. Forty grains thus taken at intervals, effected a cure by increaſing the quantity of urine, and he has had no relapſe.

CASE LV.

November 2d. Mr. P—— of T——, Æt. 42. A very ſtrong man, drank a great quantity of ſtrong ale, and was much expoſed to alterations of heat and cold. About the end of ſummer found himſelf ſhort winded, and loſt his appetite. The dyſpnœa gradually increaſed, he got a moſt diſtreſſing ſenſe of tightneſs acroſs his ſtomach, his urine was little, and high coloured, and his legs began to ſwell; his pulſe ſlender and feeble. From the 20th of *September* I frequently ſaw him, and obſerved a gradual and regular increaſe of all his complaints, notwithſtanding the uſe of the moſt powerful medicines I could preſcribe. He took chryſtals of tartar, ſeneka, gum ammoniac, ſaline draughts, emetics, tinct. of cantharides, ſpirits of nitre dulcified, ſquills in all forms, volatile alkaly, calomel, Dover's powder, &c. Bliſters and draſtic purgatives were tried, interpoſing ſalt of ſteel and gentian. I had all along felt a reluctance to preſcribe the Digitalis in this caſe, from a perſuaſion that it would not ſucceed.

At length I was compelled to it, and directed one grain to be given every two hours until it ſhould excite nauſea. This it did; but, as I expected, it did no more. The reaſon of this belief will be mentioned hereafter. Five days after this laſt trial I gave him aſſafetida in large quantity, flattered by a hope that his extreme ſufferings from the ſtate of his reſpiration, might perhaps ariſe in part from ſpaſm, but my hopes were in vain. I now thought of uſing an infuſion of tobacco, and preſcribed the following:

R. Fol. Nicotian. incif. ʒii.
Aq. bull. ℔ſs.
Sp. Vini rectif. ʒi digere per horam.

I directed a ſpoonful of this to be given every two hours until it ſhould vomit. This medicine had no better effect than the former ones, and he died ſome days afterwards.

CASE LVI.

November 6th. Mr. H——, Æt. 47. In the laſt ſtage of a phthiſis pulmonalis, ſuffered much from dyſpnœa, and anaſarca. Squill medicines gave no relief. Digitalis in pills, with gum ammon. purged him, but opium being added, that effect ceaſed, and he continued to be relieved by them as long as he lived.

CASE

CASE LVII.

November 16th. Mrs. F———, Æt. 53. In *Auguſt* laſt was ſuddenly ſeized with epileptic fits, which continued to recur at uncertain intervals. Her belly had long been larger than natural, but without any perceptible fluctuation. Her legs and thighs ſwelled very conſiderably the beginning of this month, and now there was evidently water in the abdomen. The medicines hitherto in vain directed againſt the epileptic attacks, were now ſuſpended, and two grains of the Pulv. fol. Digital. directed to be taken every ſix hours. The effects were moſt favourable, and the dropſical ſymptoms were ſoon removed by copious urinary diſcharges.

The attacks of epilepſy ceaſed ſoon afterwards. In *February*, 1781, there was ſome return of the ſwellings, which were ſoon removed, and ſhe now enjoys very good health. Does not the narrative of this caſe throw light upon the nature of the epilepſy which ſometimes attacks women, ſoon after the ceſſation of the menſtrual flux?

1781.

CASE LVIII.

January 1ſt. Mrs. G———, of H——, Æt. 62. Aſcites and very large hard legs. After trying various medicines, under the direction of a very able phyſician, I ordered her to take one grain of Pulv.

Digital. every ſix hours, but it produced no effect. Other Medicines were then tried to as little purpoſe. About the end of *February*, I directed an infuſion of the Fol. Digital. but with no better ſucceſs. Other methods were thought of, but none proved efficacious, and ſhe died a few weeks afterwards.

CASE LIX.

January 3d. Mrs. B———, Æt. 53. Aſcites, anaſarca, and jaundice. After a purge of calomel and jallap, was ordered the Infuſion of Digitalis: it acted kindly as a diuretic, and greatly reduced her ſwellings. Other medicines were then adminiſtered, with a view to her other complaints, but to no purpoſe, and ſhe died about a month afterwards.

CASE LX.

January 14th. Mr. B——, of D——. Jaundice and aſcites, the conſequences of great intemperance. Extremely emaciated; his tongue and fauces covered with apthous cruſts, and his appetite gone. He firſt took tincture of cantharides with infuſum amarum, then vitriolic ſalts, and various other medicines without relief; Infuſum Digitalis was given afterwards, but was equally unſucceſsful.

CASE LXI.

February 2d. I was deſired by the late learned and ingenious Dr. Groome, to viſit Miſs S——, a young

young lady in the laſt ſtate of emaciation from a dropſy. Every probable means to relieve her had been attempted by Dr. Groome, but to no purpoſe; and ſhe had undergone the operation of the paracenteſis repeatedly. The Doctor knew, he ſaid, that I had cured many caſes of dropſy, by the Digitalis, after other more uſual methods had been attempted without ſucceſs, and he wiſhed this lady to try that medicine under my direction; after examining the patient, and enquiring into the hiſtory of the diſeaſe, I was ſatisfied that the dropſy was encyſted, and that no medicine could avail. The Digitalis, however, was directed, and ſhe took it, but without advantage. She had determined not to be tapped again, and neither perſuaſion, nor diſtreſs from the diſtenſion, could prevail upon her: I at length propoſed to make an opening into the ſac, by means of a cauſtic, which was done under the judicious management of Mr. Wainwright, ſurgeon, at Dudley. The water was evacuated without any accident, and the patient afterwards let it out herſelf from time to time as the preſſure of it became troubleſome, until ſhe died at length perfectly exhauſted.

Query. Is there not a probability that this method, aſſiſted by bandage, might be uſed ſo as to effect a cure, in the earlier ſtages of ovarium dropſy?

CASE LXII.

February 27th. Mrs. O——, of T——, Æt. 52, with a conſtitution worn out by various complicated

diſorders, at length became dropſical. The Digitalis was given in ſmall doſes, in hopes of temporary benefit, and it did not fail to fulfil our expectations.

CASE LXIII.

March 16th. Mrs. P——, Æt. 47. Great debility, pale countenance, loſs of appetite, legs ſwelled, urine in ſmall quantity. A dram of Fol. ſiccat. Digital. in a half pint infuſion was ordered, and an ounce of this infuſion directed to be taken every morning. Myrrh and ſteel were given at intervals. Her urine ſoon increaſed, and the ſymptoms of dropſy diſappeared.

CASE LXIV.

March 18th. Mr. W———, in the laſt ſtage of a pulmonary conſumption became dropſical. The Digitalis was given, but without any good effect.

CASE LXV.

April 6th. Mr. B———, Æt. 63. For ſome years back had complained of being aſthmatical, and was not without ſuſpicion of diſeaſed viſcera. The laſt winter he had been moſtly confined to his houſe; became dropſical, loſt his appetite, and his ſkin and eyes turned yellow. By the uſe of medicines of the deobſtruent claſs he became leſs diſcoloured, and the hardneſs about his ſtomach ſeemed to yield; but the aſcites and anaſarcous ſymptoms increaſed ſo as to oppreſs his breathing exceed-

exceedingly. Alkaline falts, and other diuretics failing of their effects, I ordered him to take an infuf. of Digitalis. It operated fo powerfully that it became neceffary to fupport him with cordials and blifters, but it freed him from the dropfy, and his breath became quite eafy. He then took foap, rhubarb, tartar of vitriol, and fteel, and gradually attained a good ftate of health, which he ftill continues to enjoy.

CASE LXVI.

April 8th. Mr. B——, Æt. 60. A corpulent man, with a ftone in his bladder, from which at times his fufferings are extreme. He had been affected with what was fuppofed to be an afthma, for feveral years by fits, but through the laft winter his breath had been much worfe than ufual; univerfal anafarca came on, and foon afterwards an afcites. Now his urine was fmall in quantity and much faturated, the dyfuria was more dreadful than ever; his breath would not allow him to lie in bed, nor would the dyfuria permit him to fleep; in this diftrefsful fituation, after having ufed other medicines to little purpofe, I directed an infufion of Digitalis to be given. When the quantity of urine became more plentiful, the pain from his ftone grew eafier; in a few days the dropfy and afthma difappeared, and he foon regained his ufual ftrength and health. Every year fince, there has been a tendency to a return of thefe complaints, but he has recourfe to the infufion, and immediately removes them.

CASE

CASE LXVII.

April 24th. Mr. M——, of C——, Æt. 57. Aſthma, anaſarca, jaundice, and great hardneſs and ſtraitneſs acroſs the region of the ſtomach. After a free exhibition of neutral draughts, alkaline ſalt, &c. the dropſy and difficult breathing remaining the ſame, he took Infuſum Digitalis, which removed thoſe complaints. He never loſt the hardneſs about his ſtomach, but enjoyed very tolerable health for three years afterwards, without any return of the dropſy.

CASE LXVIII.

April 25th. Mrs. J——, Æt. 42. Phthiſis pulmonalis and anaſarcous legs and thighs. She took the Infuſum Digitalis without effect. Myrrh and ſteel, with fixed alkaly, were then ordered, but to no purpoſe.

CASE LXIX.

May 1ſt. Maſter W——, of St——, Æt. 6. I found him with every ſymptom of hydrocephalus internus. As it was yet early in the diſeaſe, in conſequence of ideas which will be mentioned hereafter, I directed ſix ounces of blood to be immediately taken from the arm; the temporal artery to be opened the ſucceeding day; the head to be ſhaven, and ſix pints of cold water to be poured upon it every fourth hour, and two ſcruples of ſtrong mercurial

curial ointment to be rubbed into the legs every day. Five days afterwards, finding the febrile ſymptoms very much abated, and judging the remaining diſeaſe to be the effect of effuſion, I directed a ſcruple of Fol. Digital. ſiccat. to be infuſed in three ounces of water, and a table ſpoonful of the infuſion to be given every third or fourth hour, until its action ſhould be ſomeway ſenſible. The effect was, an increaſed ſecretion of urine; and the patient ſoon recovered.

CASE LXX.

May 3d. Mrs. B——, Æt. 59. Aſcites and anaſarca, with ſtrong ſymptoms of diſeaſed viſcera. Infuſum Digitalis was at firſt preſcribed, and preſently removed the dropſy. She was then put upon ſaline draughts and calomel. After ſome time ſhe became feveriſh: the fever proved intermittent, and was cured by the bark.

CASE LXXI.

May 3d. Mr. S——, Æt. 48. A ſtrong man, who had lived intemperately. For ſome time paſt his breath had been very ſhort, his legs ſwollen towards evening, and his urine ſmall in quantity. Eight ounces of the Infuſ. Digitalis cauſed a conſiderable flow of urine; his complaints gradually vaniſhed, and did not return.

CASE

CASE LXXII.

May 24th. Joſeph B——, Æt. 50. Aſcites, anaſarca, and jaundice, from intemperate living. Infuſion of Digitalis produced naufea, and lowered the frequency of the pulſe; but had no other ſenſible effects. His diſorder continued to increaſe, and killed him about two months afterwards.

CASE LXXIII.

June 29th. Mr. B——, Æt. 60. A hard drinker; afflicted with aſthma, jaundice, and dropſy. His appetite gone; his water foul and in ſmall quantity. Neutral ſaline mixture, chryſtals of tartar, vinum chalybeat. and other medicines had been preſcribed to little advantage. Infuſion of Fol. Digitalis acted powerfully as a diuretic, and removed the moſt urgent of his complaints, viz. the dropſical and aſthmatical ſymptoms.

The following winter his breathing grew bad again, his appetite totally failed, and he died, but without any return of the aſcites.

CASE LXXIV.

June 29th. Mr. A——, Æt. 58. Kept a public houſe and drank very hard. He had ſymptoms of diſeaſed viſcera, jaundice, aſcites, and anaſarca. After taking various deobſtruents and diuretics, to no purpoſe, he was ordered the Infuſion of Digitalis:

a few

a few doſes occaſioned a plentiful flow of urine, relieved his breath, and reduced his ſwellings; but, on account of his great weakneſs, it was judged imprudent to urge the medicine to the entire evacuation of the water. He was ſo much relieved as to be able to come down ſtairs and to walk about, but his want of appetite and jaundice continuing, and his debility increaſing, he died in about two months.

CASE LXXV.

July 18th. Mrs. B——, Æt. 46. A little woman, and very much deformed. Aſthmatical for many years. For ſeveral months paſt had been worſe than uſual; appetite totally gone, legs ſwollen, ſenſe of great fulneſs about her ſtomach, countenance fallen, lips livid, could not lie down.

The uſual modes of practice failing, the Digitalis was tried, but with no better ſucceſs, and in about a month ſhe died; not without ſuſpicion of her death having been accelerated a few days, by her taking half a grain of opium. This may be a caution to young practitioners to be careful how they venture upon even ſmall doſes of opium in ſuch conſtitutions, however much they may be urged by the patient to preſcribe ſomething that may procure a little reſt and eaſe.

CASE

CASE LXXVI.

Auguſt 12th. Mr. L——, Æt. 65, the perſon whoſe Caſe is recorded at No. XXIV, had a return of his inſanity, after near two years perfect health. He was extremely reduced when I ſaw him, and the medicine which cured him before was now adminiſtered without effect, for his weakneſs was ſuch that I did not dare to urge it.

CASE LXXVII.

September 10th. Mr. V——, of S——, Æt. 47. A man of ſtrong fibre, and the remains of a florid complexion. His diſeaſe an aſcites and ſwelled legs, the conſequence of a very free courſe of life; he had been once tapped, and taken much medicine before I ſaw him. The Digitalis was now directed: it lowered his pulſe, but did not prove diuretic. He returned home, and ſoon after was tapped again, but ſurvived the operation only a few hours.

CASE LXXVIII.

September 25th. Mr. O——, of M——, Æt. 63. Very painful and general ſwellings in all his limbs, which had confined him moſtly to his bed ſince the preceding winter; the ſwellings were uniform, tenſe, and reſiſting, but the ſkin not diſcoloured. After trying guiacum and Dover's powder without advantage, I directed Infuſion of Digitalis. It acted on the kidneys, but did not relieve him. It is not

eaſy

eaſy to ſay what the diſeaſe was, and the patient living at a diſtance, I never learnt the future progreſs or termination of it.

CASE LXXIX.

September 26th. Mr. D——, Æt. 42, a very ſenſible and judicious ſurgeon at B——, in Staffordſhire, laboured under aſcites and very large anaſarcous legs, together with indubitable ſymptoms of diſeaſed viſcera. Having tried the uſual diuretics to no purpoſe, I directed a ſcruple of Fol. Digital. ſiccat. in a four ounce infuſion, a table ſpoonful to be taken twice a day. The ſecond bottle wholly removed his dropſy, which never returned.

CASE LXXX.

September 27th. Mrs. E——, Æt. 42. A fat ſedentary woman; after a long illneſs, very indiſtinctly marked; had ſymptoms of enlarged liver and dropſy. In this caſe I was happy in the aſſiſtance of Dr. Aſh. Digitalis was once exhibited in ſmall doſes, but to no better purpoſe than many other medicines. She ſuffered great pain in the abdomen for ſeveral weeks, and after her death, the liver, ſpleen, and kidneys were found of a pale colour, and very greatly enlarged, but the quantity of effuſed fluid in the cavity was not more than a pint.

CASE

CASE LXXXI.

October 28th. Mr. B——, Æt. 33. Had drank an immenſe quantity of mild ale, and was now become dropſical. He was a luſty man, of a pale complexion: his belly large, and his legs and thighs ſwollen to an enormous ſize. I directed the Infuſion of Digitalis, which in ten days completely emptied him. He was then put upon the uſe of ſteel and bitters, and directed to live temperately, which I believe he did, for I ſaw him two years afterwards in perfect health.

CASE LXXXII.

November 14th. Mr. W——, of T——, Æt. 49. A luſty man, with an aſthma and anaſarca. He had taken ſeveral medicines by the direction of a very judicious apothecary, but not getting relief as he had been accuſtomed to do in former years, he came under my direction. For the ſpace of a month I tried to relieve him by fixed alkaly, ſeneka, Dovers powder, gum ammoniac, ſquill, &c. but without effect. I then directed Infuſion of Digitalis, which ſoon increaſed the flow of urine without exciting nauſea, and in a few days removed all his complaints.

CASE

1782.

CASE LXXXIII.

January 23d. Mr. Q——, Æt. 74. A ſtone in his bladder for many years; dropſical for the laſt three months. Had taken at different times ſoap with ſquill and gum ammoniac; ſoap lees; chryſtals of tartar, oil of juniper, ſeneka, jallap, &c. but the dropſical ſymptoms ſtill increaſed, and the dyſuria from the ſtone became very urgent. I now directed a dram of the Fol. Digit. ſiccat. in a half pint infuſion, half an ounce to be given every ſix hours. This preſently relieved the dyſuria, and ſoon removed the dropſy, without any diſturbance to his ſyſtem.

CASE LXXXIV.

January 27th. Mr. D——, Æt. 86. The debility of age and dropſical legs had long oppreſſed him. A few weeks before his death his breathing became very ſhort, he could not lie down in bed, and his urine was ſmall in quantity. A wine glaſs of a weak Infuſion of Digitalis, warmed with aromatics, was ordered to be taken twice a day. It afforded a temporary relief, but he did not long ſurvive.

CASE LXXXV.

January 28th. Mr. D——, Æt. 35. A publican and a hard drinker. Aſcites, anaſarca, diſeaſed viſcera

viſcera, and ſlight attacks of hæmoptoe. A dram of Fol. Digital. ſicc. in a half pint infuſion, of which one ounce was given night and morning, proved diuretic and removed his dropſy. He then took medicines calculated to relieve his other complaints. The dropſy did not return during my attendance upon him, which was three or four weeks. A quack then undertook to cure him with blue vitriol vomits, but as I am informed, he preſently ſunk under that rough treatment.

CASE LXXXVI.

January 29th. Mrs. O——, of D——, Æt. 53. A conſtant and diſtreſſing palpitation of her heart, with great debility. From a degree of anaſarca in her legs I was led to ſuſpect effuſion in the Pericardium, and therefore directed Digitalis, but it produced no benefit. She then took various other medicines with the ſame want of ſucceſs, and about ten months afterwards died ſuddenly.

CASE LXXXVII.

January 31ſt. Mr. T——, of A——, Æt. 81. Great difficulty of breathing, ſo that he had not lain in bed for the laſt ſix weeks, and ſome ſwelling in his legs. Theſe complaints were ſubſequent to a very ſevere cold, and he had ſtill a troubleſome cough. He told me that at his age he did not look for a cure, but ſhould be glad of relief, if it could be obtained without taking much medicine. I directed an Infuſion of Digitalis, a dram to eight ounces,

one

one ſpoonful to be taken every morning, and two at night. He only took this quantity; for in four days he could lie down, and ſoon afterwards quitted his chamber. In a month he had a return of his complaints, and was relieved as before.

CASE LXXXVIII.

January 31ſt. Mrs. J——, of S——, Æt. 67. A luſty woman, of a florid complexion, large belly, and very thick legs. She had been kept alive for ſome years by the diſcharge from ulcers in her legs; but the ſores now put on a very diſagreeable livid appearance, her belly grew ſtill larger, her breath ſhort, her pulſe feeble, and ſhe could not take nouriſhment. Several medicines having been given in vain, the Digitalis was tried, but with no better effect; and in about a month ſhe died.

CASE LXXXIX.

February 2d. Mr. B——, Æt. 73. An univerſal dropſy. He took various medicines, and Digitalis in ſmall doſes, but without any good effect.

CASE XC.

February 24th. Maſter M——, of W——, Æt. 10. An epilepſy of ſome years continuance, which had never been interrupted by any of the various methods tried for his relief. The Digitalis was given for a few days, but as he lived at a diſtance, ſo that I could not attend to its effects, he only took one

half pint infuſion, which made no alteration in his complaint.

CASE XCI.

March 6th. Mr. H——, Æt. 62. A very hard drinker, and had twice had attacks of apoplexy. He had now an aſcites, was anaſarcous, and had every appearance of a diſeaſed liver. Small doſes of calomel, Dover's powder, infuſum amarum, and ſal ſodæ palliated his ſymptoms for a while; theſe failing; bliſters, ſquills, and cordials were given without effect. A weak Infuſion of Digitalis, well aromatiſed, was then directed to be given in ſmall doſes. It rather ſeemed to check than to increaſe the ſecretion of urine, and ſoon produced ſickneſs. Failing in its uſual effect, the medicine was no longer continued; but every thing that was tried proved equally inefficacious, and he did not long ſurvive.

CASE XCII.

May 10th. Mrs. P——, Æt. 40. Spaſmodic aſthma of many years continuance, which had frequently been relieved by ammoniacum, ſquills, &c. but theſe now failing in their wonted effects, an Infuſ. of Fol. Digitalis was tried, but it ſeemed rather to increaſe than relieve her ſymptoms.

CASE XCIII.

May 22d. Mr. O——, of B——, Æt. 61. A very large man, and a free liver; after an attack of hemi-

hemiplegia early in the ſpring, from which he only partially recovered, became dropſical. The dropſy occupied both legs and thighs, and the arm of the affected ſide. I directed an Infuſion of Digitalis in ſmall doſes, ſo as not to affect his ſtomach. The ſwellings gradually ſubſided, and in the courſe of the ſummer he recovered perfectly from the palſy.

CASE XCIV.

July 5th. Mr. C——, of W——, Æt. 28. Had drank very freely both of ale and ſpirits; and in conſequence had an aſcites, very large legs, and great fulneſs about the ſtomach. He was ordered to take the Infuſion of Digitalis night and morning for a few days, and then to keep his bowels open with chryſtals of tartar. The firſt half pint of infuſion relieved him greatly; after an interval of a fortnight it was repeated, and he got well without any other medicine, only continuing the chryſtals of tartar occaſionally. I forgot to mention that this gentleman, before I ſaw him, had been for two months under the care of a very celebrated phyſician, by whoſe direction he had taken mercurials, bitters, ſquills, alkaline ſalts, and other things, but without much advantage.

CASE XCV.

March 6th. Mrs. W——, Æt. 36. In the laſt ſtage of a pulmonary conſumption, took the Infuſ. Digitalis, but without any advantage.

CASE XCVI.

Auguſt 20th. Mr. P——, Æt. 43. In the year 1781 he had a ſevere peripneumony, from which he recovered with difficulty. At the date of this, when he firſt conſulted me, the ſymptoms of hydrothorax were pretty obvious. I directed a purge, and then the Infuſum Digitalis, three drams to half a pint, one ounce to be taken every four hours. It made him ſick, and occaſioned a copious diſcharge of urine. His complaints immediately vaniſhed, and he remains in perfect health.

CASE XCVII.

September 24th. Mrs. R——, of B——, Æt. 35, the mother of many children. After her laſt lying in, three months ago, had that kind of ſwelling in one of her legs which is mentioned at No. VIII. XXVI, and XXXI. A conſiderable degree of ſwelling ſtill remained; the limb was heavy to her feeling, and not devoid of pain. I directed a bolus of five grains of Pulv. Digitalis, and twenty-five of crude quickſilver rubbed down, with conſerve of cynoſbat. to be taken at bed-time, and afterwards an Infuſion of red bark and Fol. Digitalis to be taken twice a day. There was half an ounce of bark and half a dram of the leaves in a pint infuſion: the doſe two ounces.

The leg ſoon began to mend, and two pints of the infuſion finiſhed the cure.

CASE

CASE XCVIII.

September 25th. Mr. R———, Æt. 60. Complained to me of a ſickneſs after eating, and for ſome weeks paſt he had thrown up all his food, ſoon after he had ſwallowed it. He had taken various medicines, but found benefit from none, and had tried various kinds of diet. He was now very thin and weak; but had a good appetite. As ſeveral very probable methods had been preſcribed, and as the uſual ſymptoms of organic diſeaſe were abſent, I determined to give him a ſpoonful of the Infuſion of Digitalis twice a day; made by digeſting two drams of the dried leaves in half a pint of cinnamon water. From the time he began to take this medicine he ſuffered no return of his complaint, and ſoon recovered his fleſh and his ſtrength.

It ſhould be obſerved, that I had frequently ſeen the Digitalis remove ſickneſs, though preſcribed for very different complaints.

CASE XCIX.

September 30th. Mrs. A——, Æt. 38. Hydrothorax and anaſarca. Her cheſt was very conſiderably deformed. One half pint of the Digitalis Infuſion entirely cured her.

CASE C.

September 30th. Mr. R——, of W——, Æt. 47. Hydrothorax and anaſarca. An Infuſion of Digitalis was directed, and after the expected effects from that ſhould take place, ſixty drops of tincture of cantharides twice a day. As he was coſtive, pills of aloes and ſteel were ordered to be taken occaſionally.

This plan ſucceeded perfectly. About a month afterwards he had ſome rheumatic affections, which were removed by guiacum.

CASE CI.

October 2d. Mrs. R———, Æt. 60. Diſeaſed viſcera; aſcites and anaſarca. Had taken various deobſtruent and diuretic medicines to little purpoſe. The Digitalis brought on a nauſea and languor, but had no effect on the kidneys.

CASE CII.

October 12th. Mr. R——, Æt. 41. A publican, and a hard drinker. His legs and belly greatly ſwollen; appetite gone, countenance yellow, breath very ſhort, and cough troubleſome. After a vomit I gave him calomel, ſaline draughts, ſteel and bitters, &c. He had taken the more uſual diuretics before I ſaw him. As the dropſical ſymptoms increaſed, I changed his medicines for pills made of

ſoap

ſoap, containing two grains of Pulv. fol. Digital. in each doſe, and, as he was coſtive, two grains of jallap. He took them twice a day, and in a week was free from every appearance of dropſy. The jaundice ſoon afterwards vaniſhed, and tonics reſtored him to perfect health.

CASE CIII.

October 12th. Mr. B——, Æt. 39. Kept a public houſe, drank very freely, and became dropſical; he complained alſo of rheumatic pains. I directed Infuſion of Digitalis, half an ounce twice a day. In eight days the ſwellings in his legs and the fulneſs about his ſtomach diſappeared. His rheumatic affections were cured by the uſual methods.

CASE CIV.

October 22d. Maſter B——, Æt. 3. Aſcites and univerſal anaſarca. Half a grain of Fol. Digital. ſiccat. given every ſix hours, produced no effect; probably the medicine was waſted in giving. An infuſion of the dried leaf was then tried, a dram to four ounces, two tea ſpoonfuls for a doſe; this ſoon increaſed the flow of urine to a very great degree, and he got perfectly well.

CASE CV.

October 30th. Mr. G——, of W——, Æt. 88. The gentleman mentioned in No. XLVII. His complaints and manner of living the ſame as there mentioned.

mentioned. I ordered an Infuſion of the Digitalis, a dram and half to half a pint; one ounce to be taken twice a day; which cured him in a ſhort time.

On *March* the 23d, 1784, he ſent for me again. His complaints were the ſame, but he was much more feeble. On this account I directed a dram of the Fol. Digitalis to be infuſed for a night in four ounces of ſpirituous cinnamon water, a ſpoonful to be taken every night. This had not a ſufficient effect; therefore, on the 22d of *April*, I ordered the infuſion preſcribed two years before, which ſoon removed his complaints.

He died ſoon afterwards, fairly worn out, in his ninetieth year.

CASE CVI.

November 2d. Mr. S———, of B——h——, Æt. 61. Hydrothorax and ſwelled legs. Squills were given for a week in very full doſes, and other modes of relief attempted; but his breathing became ſo bad, his countenance ſo livid, his pulſe ſo feeble, and his extremities ſo cold, that I was apprehenſive upon my ſecond viſit that he had not twenty-four hours to live. In this ſituation I gave him the Infuſum Digitalis ſtronger than uſual, viz. two drams to eight ounces. Finding himſelf relieved by this, he continued to take it, contrary to the directions given, after the diuretic effects had appeared.

The

The ſickneſs which followed was truly alarming; it continued at intervals for many days, his pulſe ſunk down to forty in a minute, every object appeared green to his eyes, and between the exertions of reaching he lay in a ſtate approaching to ſyncope. The ſtrongeſt cordials, volatiles, and repeated bliſters barely ſupported him. At length, however, he did begin to emerge out of the extreme danger into which his folly had plunged him; and by generous living and tonics, in about two months he came to enjoy a perfect ſtate of health.

CASE CVII.

November 19th. Maſter S———, Æt. 8. Aſcites and anaſarca. A dram of Fol. Digitalis in a ſix ounce infuſion, given in doſes of a ſpoonful, effected a perfect cure, without producing nauſea.

1783.

The reader will perhaps remark, that from the middle of *January* to the firſt of *May*, not a ſingle caſe occurs, and that the amount of caſes is likewiſe leſs than in the preceding or enſuing years; to prevent erroneous conjectures or concluſions, it may be expedient to mention, that the ill ſtate of my own health obliged me to retire from buſineſs for ſome time in the ſpring of the year, and that I did not perfectly recover until the following ſummer.

CASE

CASE CVIII.

January 15th. Mrs. G——, Æt. 57. A very fat woman; has been dropſical ſince *November* laſt; with ſymptoms of diſeaſed viſcera. Various remedies having been taken without effect, an Infuſion of Digitalis was directed twice a day, with a view to palliate the more urgent ſymptoms. She took it four days without relief, and as her recovery ſeemed impoſſible it was urged no farther.

CASE CIX.

May 1ſt. Mrs. D———, Æt. 72. A thin woman, with very large anaſarcous legs and thighs; no appetite and general debility. After a month's trial of cordials and diuretics of different kinds, the ſurgeon who had ſcarified her legs apprehended they would mortify; ſhe had very great pain in them, they were very red and black by places, and extremely tenſe. It was evident that unleſs the tenſion could be removed, gangrene muſt ſoon enſue. I therefore gave her Infuſum Digitalis, which increaſed the ſecretion of urine by the following evening, ſo that the great tenſion began to abate, and together with it the pain and inflammation. She was ſo feeble that I dared not to urge the medicine further, but ſhe occaſionally took it at intervals until the time of her death, which happened a few weeks afterwards.

CASE

CASE CX.

May 18th. I was desired to prescribe for Mary Bowen, a poor girl at Hagley. Her disease appeared to me to be an ovarium dropsy. In other respects she was in perfect health. I directed the Digitalis to be given, and gradually pushed so as to affect her very considerably. It was done; but the patient still carries her big belly, and is otherwise very well.

CASE CXI.

May 25th. Mr. G——, Æt. 28. In the last stage of a pulmonary consumption of the scrophulous kind, took an Infusion of Digitalis, but without any advantage.

CASE CXII.

May 31st. Mr. H——, Æt. 27. In the last stage of a phthisis pulmonalis became dropsical. He took half a pint of the Infusum Digitalis in six days, but without any sensible effect.

CASE CXIII.

June 3d. Master B———, of D——, Æt. 6. With an universal anasarca, had an extremely troublesome cough. An opiate was given to quiet the cough at night, and 2 tea spoonfuls of Infus. Digit. were ordered every six hours. The dropsy was presently removed; but the cough continued, his flesh

fleſh waſted, his ſtrength failed, and ſome weeks afterwards he died tabid.

CASE CXIV.

June 19th. Mrs. L——, Æt. 28. A dropſy in the laſt ſtage of a phthiſis. Infuſum Digitalis was tried to no purpoſe.

CASE CXV.

June 20th. Mrs. H——, Æt. 46. A very fat, ſhort woman; had ſuffered ſeverely through the laſt winter and ſpring from what had been called aſthma; but for ſome time paſt an univerſal anaſarca prevailed, and ſhe had not lain down for ſeveral weeks. After trying vitriolic acid, tincture of cantharides, ſquills, &c. without advantage, ſhe took half a pint of Infuſ. Digitalis in three days. In a week afterwards the dropſical ſymptoms diſappeared, her breath became eaſy, her appetite returned, and ſhe recovered perfect health. The infuſion neither occaſioned ſickneſs nor purging.

CASE CXVI.

June 24th. Mrs. B——, Æt. 40. A puerperal fever, and ſwelled legs and thighs. The fever not yielding to the uſual practice, I directed an Infuſion of Fol. Digitalis. It proved diuretic; the ſwellings ſubſided, but the fever continued, and a few days afterwards a diarrhœa coming on, ſhe died.

CASE

CASE CXVII.

July 22d. Mr. F——, Æt. 48. A ſtrong man, of a florid complexion, in conſequence of intemperance became dropſical, with ſymptoms of diſeaſed viſcera, great dyſpnœa, a very troubleſome cough, and total loſs of appetite. He took mild mercurials, pills of ſoap, rhubarb, and tartar of vitriol, with ſoluble tartar and dulcified ſpirits of nitre in barley water. After a reaſonable trial of this plan, he took ſquill every ſix hours, and a ſolution of aſſafetida and gum ammoniac, to eaſe his breathing: finding no relief, I gave him chryſtals of tartar with ginger; but his remaining health and ſtrength daily declined, and he was not at all benefited by the medicines. I was averſe to the uſe of Digitalis in this caſe, judging from what I had ſeen in ſimilar inſtances of tenſe fibre, that it would not act as a diuretic. I therefore once more directed ſquill, with decoction of ſeneka and ſal ſodæ; but it was inefficacious. His ſtrength being much broken down, I then ordered gum ammoniac, with ſmall doſes of opium, and infuſum amarum, continuing the ſquill at intervals. At length I was urged to give the Digitalis, and conſidering the caſe as deſperate, I agreed to do it. The event was as I expected; no increaſe in the urine took place; and the medicine being ſtill continued, his pulſe became ſlow, and he apparently ſunk under its ſedative effects. He was neither purged nor vomited; and had the Digitalis either been omitted

alto-

altogether, or ſuſpended upon its firſt effects upon the pulſe being obſerved, he might perhaps have exiſted a week longer.

CASE CXVIII.

July 26th. Mr. W——, of W——, Æt. 47. Phthiſis pulmonalis, jaundice, aſcites, and ſwelled legs. As it was probable that the only relief I could give in a caſe ſo circumſtanced, would be by carrying off the effuſed fluids. I tried ſquill and fixed alkaly; and theſe failing, I ordered the Infuſum Digitalis. This had the deſired effect, and, I believe, prolonged his life a few weeks.

CASE CXIX.

Auguſt 15th. Mrs. C———, Æt. 60. Aſcites, anaſarca, diſeaſed viſcera, paucity of urine, and total loſs of appetite. Theſe complaints had heretofore exiſted repeatedly, and had been removed by deobſtruent and diuretic medicines; but in this attack the ſymptoms were ſuffered to exiſt a longer time and in a greater degree, before aſſiſtance was ſought for. The remedies that uſed to relieve her were now exhibited to no purpoſe. Mild mercurials, ſoap, rhubarb, and ſquill were tried; but ſhe grew rapidly worſe. Saline draughts with acetum ſcilliticum ſeemed for a few days to check the progreſs of her complaint, but they ſoon loſt their effect, and diarrhœa enſued upon every attempt to increaſe the frequency of the doſe. Draughts with Infuſ. Digital. were then directed to be taken twice a day.

a day. The effect was a powerful action on the kidneys, and a reduction of the ſwellings, but without ſickneſs. A degree of appetite returned, but ſtill the tendency to diarrhœa exiſted, and kept her weak. Tonic medicines were then tried, but without advantage, and in a month it was neceſſary to have recourſe to the Digitalis again. It was directed in a half pint mixture; an ounce to be taken thrice in twenty-four hours. On the 2d day, finding her ſymptoms very much relieved, ſhe took in the abſence of her nurſe, nearly a double doſe of the medicine. The conſequence was great ſickneſs, languor continuing for ſeveral days, and almoſt a total ſtop to the ſecretion of urine, from the time the ſickneſs commenced.

The caſe now became totally unmanageable in my hands, and, after a fortnight, I was diſmiſſed, and another phyſician called in; but ſhe did not long ſurvive.

This was not the firſt, nor the laſt inſtance, in which I have ſeen too large a doſe of the medicine, defeat the very purpoſe for which it was directed.

CASE CXX.

Auguſt 22d. Mrs. S——, Æt. 36. Extreme faintineſs; anaſarcous legs and thighs; great difficulty of breathing, troubleſome cough, frequent chilly fits ſucceeded by hot ones; night ſweats, and a tendency to diarrhœa. Apprehenſive that the more

more urgent ſymptoms were cauſed by water in the lungs, I directed an Infuſion of Digitalis, with an ounce of diacodium to the half pint to prevent it purging, a wine glaſs full to be taken every night at bed-time, and a mixture with confect. cardiac. and pulv. ipecac. to be given in ſmall doſes after every looſe ſtool.

On the fourth day ſhe was better in all reſpects; had made a large quantity of water and did not purge. In a few days more ſhe loſt all her complaints, except the cough, which gradually left her, without any further aſſiſtance.

I was agreeably deceived in the event of this caſe, for I expected after the water was removed, to have had a phthiſis to contend with.

CASE CXXI.

Auguſt 25th. T—— W——, Eſq; Æt, 50. A free liver, diſeaſed viſcera, belly very tenſe, and much ſwollen; fluctuation perceptible, but the ſwelling circumſcribed; pulſe 132. This gentleman was under the care of my very worthy friend Dr. Aſh, who, having tried various modes of cure to no purpoſe, aſked me if I thought the Digitalis would anſwer in this caſe. I replied that it would not, for I had never ſeen it effectual where the ſwelling appeared very tenſe and circumſcribed. It was tried however, but did not leſſen the ſwelling. I mention this caſe, to introduce the above remark, and alſo

to

to point out the great effect the Digitalis has upon the action of the heart; for the pulse came down to 96. He was afterwards tapped, and continued, for some time under our joint attendance, but the pulse never became quicker, nor did the swelling return.

CASE CXXII.

September 7th. Mr. L——, Æt. 43. After several severe attacks of ill formed gout, attended for some time past with jaundice and other symptoms of diseased viscera, the consequences of intemperate living, was sent to Buxton; from whence he returned in three weeks with ascites and anasarca. Under this complicated load of disease, I prescribed repeatedly without advantage, and at length gave him the Digitalis, which carried off the more obvious symptoms of dropsy; but the jaundice, loss of appetite, diseased viscera, &c. rendered his recovery impossible.

1784.

CASE CXXIII.

February 12th. Mrs. C———, Æt. 54. A strong short woman of a florid complexion; complained of great fullness across the region of the stomach; short breath, a troublesome cough, loss of appetite, paucity of urine; and had a browniſh yellow tinge on her skin and in her eyes. She dated these complaints from a fall she had through a trap door about the beginning of winter. From the beginning of January to this time, she had been repeatedly let

blood, had taken calomel purges with jallap; pills of ſoap, rhubarb and calomel; ſaline julep with acet. ſcillit. nitrous decoction, garlic, mercury rubbed down, infus. amarum purg. &c. After the failure of medicines ſo powerful, and ſeemingly ſo well adapted, and during the uſe of which all the ſymptoms continued to increaſe, it was evident that a favourable event could not be expected. However, I tried the infuſum Digitalis, but it did nothing. I then gave her pills of quickſilver, ſoap and ſquill, with decoction of dandelion, and after ſome time, chryſtals of tartar with ginger. Nothing ſucceeded to our wiſhes, and the increaſe of orthopnœa compelled me occaſionally to relieve her by draſtic purges, but theſe diminiſhed her ſtrength, more in proportion than they relieved her ſymptoms. Tincture of cantharides, ſal diureticus and various other means were occaſionally tried, but with very little effect, and ſhe died towards the end of March.

CASE CXXIV.

March 31ſt. Miſs W——, Æt. 60. Had been ſubject to peripneumonic affections in the winter. She had now total loſs of appetite, very great debility, difficult breathing; much cough, a conſiderable degree of expectoration, and a paucity of urine. She had been blooded, taken ſoap, aſſaf. and ſquill, afterwards aſſaf. and ammon. with acet. ſcillit.: but all her complaints increaſing, a bliſter was applied to her back, and the Digitalis infuſion directed to be taken every night. The effect was an increaſed

ſecre-

ſecretion of urine, a conſiderable relief to her breath, and ſome return of appetite; but ſoon afterwards ſhe became hectic, ſpat purulent matter, and died in a few weeks.

CASE CXXV.

April 12th. Mrs. H——, of L——, Æt. 61. In *December* laſt this Lady, then upon a viſit in London, was attacked with ſevere ſymptoms of peripneumony. She was treated as an aſthmatic patient, but finding no relief, ſhe made an effort to return to her home to die. In her way through this place, the latter end of December, I was deſired to ſee her. By repeated bleedings, bliſters, and other uſual methods, ſhe was ſo far relieved, that ſhe wiſhed to remain under my care. After a while ſhe began to ſpit matter and became hectic. With great difficulty ſhe was kept alive during the diſcharge of the abſceſs, and about the end of March ſhe had ſwelled legs, and unequivocal ſymptoms of dropſy in the cheſt. Other diuretics failing, on the 12th of April I was induced to give her the Digitalis in ſmall doſes. The relief was great and effectual. After an interval of fifteen days, ſome ſwellings ſtill remaining in the legs, I repeated the medicine, and with ſuch good effect, that ſhe loſt all her complaints, got a keen appetite, recovered her ſtrength, and about the end of May undertook a journey of fifty miles to her own home, where ſhe ſtill remains in perfect health.

CASE CXXVI.

April 17th. Mr. F——, Æt. 59. A very fat man, and a free liver; had long been ſubject to what was called aſthma, particularly in the winter. For ſome weeks paſt his legs ſwelled, he had great ſenſe of fullneſs acroſs his ſtomach; a ſevere cough; total loſs of appetite, thirſt great, urine ſparing, his breath ſo difficult that he had not lain down in bed for ſeveral nights. Calomel, gum ammoniac, tincture of cantharides, &c. having been given in vain, I ordered two grains of pulv. fol. Digitalis made into pills, with aromatic ſpecies and ſyrup, to be given every night. On the third day his urine was leſs turbid; on the fourth conſiderably increaſed in quantity, and in ten days more he was free from all complaints, and has ſince had no relapſe.

CASE CXXVII.

May 7th. Miſs K——, Æt. 8. After a long continued ague, became hectic and dropſical. Her belly was very large, and ſhe had a total loſs of appetite. Half a grain of fol. Digital. pulv. with 2 gr. of merc. alcalis. were ordered night and morning, and an infuſion of bark and rhubarb with ſteel wine to be given in the day time. Her belly began to ſubſide in a few days, and ſhe was ſoon reſtored to health. Two other children in the family, affected nearly in the ſame way, had died, from the parents being perſuaded that an ague in the ſpring was

was healthful and ſhould not be ſtopped.—I know not how far the recovery in this caſe may be attributed to the Digitalis, but the child was ſo near dying that I dared not truſt to any leſs efficacious diuretic.

CASE CXXVIII.

June 13th. Mr. C——, Æt. 45. A fat man, had formerly drank hard, but not latterly: laſt March began to complain of difficult breathing, ſwelled legs, full belly, but without fluctuation, great thirſt, no appetite; urine thick and foul; complection browniſh yellow. Mercurial medicines, diuretics of different kinds, and bitters, had been trying for the laſt three months, but with little advantage. I directed two grains of the fol. Digital. in powder to be taken every night, and infuſ. amar. with tinct. ſacr. twice a day. In three days the quantity of his urine increaſed, in ten or twelve days all his ſymptoms diſappeared, and he has had no relapſe.

CASE CXXIX.

June 17th. Mr. N——, of W——, Æt. 54. A large man, of a pale complexion; had been ſubject to ſevere fits of aſthma for ſome years, but now worſe than uſual. The intermitting pulſe, the great diſturbance from change of poſture, and the ſwelled legs induced me to conclude that the exacerbation of his old complaint was occaſioned by ſerous effuſion. I directed pills with a grain and half of the

pulv. Digital. to be taken every night, and as he was coſtive, jallap made a part of the compoſition. He was alſo directed to take muſtardſeed every morning and a ſolution of aſſafetida twice in the day. The effect of this plan was perfectly to our wiſhes, and in a ſhort time he recovered his uſual health. About half a year afterwards he died apoplectic.

CASE CXXX.

Mary B——. A young unmarried woman. Her diſeaſe appeared to me a dropſy of the right ovarium. She took an infuſion of Digitalis; but, as I expected with no good effect. She is ſtill, I am informed, nearly in the ſame ſtate.

CASE CXXXI.

July 12th. Mrs. A——, of C———, Æt. 56. After a ſeries of indiſpoſitions for ſeveral years, became dropſical; and had long been confined to her chamber, unable to lie down or to walk. She was ſo feeble, her legs ſo much ſwelled, her breath ſo ſhort, and the ſymptoms of diſeaſed viſcera ſo ſtrong, that I dared not to entertain hopes of a cure; but wiſhing to relieve her more urgent ſymptoms, directed quickſilver rubbed down and fol. Digital. pulv. to be made into pills: the doſe, containing two grains of the latter, to be given night and morning. She was alſo ordered to take a draught with a dram of æther twice a day, and to have ſcapulary iſſues. Her breath was ſo much relieved,

that

that ſhe was able ſoon afterwards to come down ſtairs; but her conſtitution was too much broken to admit of a recovery.

CASE CXXXII.

July 16th. Mr. B——, of W——, Æt. 31. After a tertian ague of 12 months continuation, ſuffered great indiſpoſition for 10 months more. He chiefly complained of great ſtraitneſs and pain in the hypochondriac region, very ſhort breath, ſwelled legs, want of appetite. He had been under the care of ſome very ſenſible practitioners, but his complaints increaſed, and he determined to come to Birmingham. I found him ſupported upright in his chair, by pillows, every attempt to lean back or ſtoop forward giving him the ſenſation of inſtantaneous ſuffocation. He ſaid he had not been in bed for many weeks. His countenance was ſunk and pale; his lips livid; his belly, thighs and legs very greatly ſwollen; hands and feet cold, the nails almoſt black, pulſe 160 tremulous beats in a minute, but the pulſation in the carotid arteries was ſuch as to be viſible to the eye, and to ſhake his head ſo that he could not hold it ſtill. His thirſt was very great, his urine ſmall in quantity, and he was diſpoſed to purge. I immediately ordered a ſpoonful of the infuſum Digitalis every ſix hours, with a ſmall quantity of laudanum, to prevent its running off by ſtool, and decoction of leontodon taraxacum to allay his thirſt. The next day he began to make water freely, and could allow

allow of being put into bed, but was raiſed high with pillows. Omit the infuſion. That night he parted with ſix quarts of water, and the next night could lie down and ſlept comfortably. *July* 21ſt. he took a mild mercurial bolus. On the 25th. the diuretic effects of the Digitalis having nearly ceaſed, he was ordered to take three grains of the pulv. Digital. night and morning, for five days, and a draught with half an ounce of vin. chalyb. twice a day. *Auguſt* 15th. He took a purge of calomel and jallap, and ſome ſwelling ſtill remaining in his legs, the Digitalis infuſion was repeated. The water having been thus entirely evacuated, he was ordered ſaline draughts with acetum ſcilliticum and pills of ſalt of ſteel and extract of gentian. About a month after this, he returned home perfectly well.

CASE CXXXIII.

July 28th. Mr. A—— of W——, Æt. 29, became dropſical towards the cloſe of a pulmonary conſumption. He was ordered 12 grains of pulv. fol. cicutæ and 1 of Digitalis twice a day. No remarkable effect took place.

CASE CXXXIV.

July 31. Mr. M——, Æt. 37. Hydrothorax. A ſingle grain of fol. Digital. pulv. taken every night for three weeks cured him. The medicine never made him ſick, but increaſed his urine, which became clear; whereas before it had been high coloured and turbid.

CASE

CASE CXXXV.

Auguſt 6th. Mr. C—— of B———, Æt. 42. Aſthma and anaſarca, the conſequence of free living. He had been for ſome time under the care of an eminent phyſician of this place, but his complaints proving unuſually obſtinate, he conſulted me. I directed an infuſion of Digitalis to be taken every night, and a mixture with ſquill and tincture of cantharides twice every day. In about a week he became better, and continued daily mending. He has ſince enjoyed perfect health, having quitted a line of buſineſs which expoſed him to drink too much.

CASE CXXXVI.

Auguſt 6th. Mr. M—— of C——, Æt. 44. Aſcites and anaſarca, preceded by ſymptoms of the epileptic kind. He was ordered to take two grains of pulv. Digitalis every morning, and three every night; likewiſe a ſaline draught with ſyrup of ſquills, every day at noon. His complaints ſoon yielded to this treatment, but in the month of November following he relapſed, and again aſked my advice. The Digitalis alone was now preſcribed, which proved as efficacious as in the firſt trial. He then took bitters twice a day, and vitriolic acid night and morning, and now enjoys good health.

Before the Digitalis was preſcribed, he had taken jallap purges, ſoluble tartar, ſalt of ſteel, vitriol of copper, &c.

CASE

CASE CXXXVII.

Auguſt 10th. Mrs. W——, Æt. 55. An anaſarcous leg, and ſciatica; full habit. After bleeding and a purge, a bliſter was applied in the manner recommended by Cotunnius; and two grains of fol. Digital. with fifteen of fol. cicutæ were directed to be taken night and morning. The medicine acted only as a diuretic; the pain and ſwelling of the limb gradually abated; and I have not heard of any return.

I muſt here bear witneſs to the efficacy of Cotunnius's method of bliſtering in the ſciatica, having uſed it in a great number of caſes, and generally with ſucceſs.

CASE CXXXVIII.

Auguſt 16th. Mrs. A—— of S——, Æt. 78. About the middle of Summer began to complain of ſhort breath, great debility, and loſs of appetite. At this time there were evident marks of effuſion in the thorax, and ſome ſwelling in the legs. The advanced age, the weakneſs, and other circumſtances of this patient, precluded every idea of her recovery; but ſomething was to be attempted. Squills and other remedies had been tried; I therefore directed pills with two or three grains of the pulv. Digitalis to be taken every night for ſix nights, and a ſaline draught with forty drops of acetum ſcillit. twice in the day. She took but few of the draughts, ſeldom more

more than half one at a time, for they purged her, and ſhe diſliked them. The pills ſhe took regularly, and with the happieſt effect, for ſhe could lie down, her breath was very much relieved, and a degree of appetite returned. *Sept.* 4th, ſome return of her ſymptoms demanded the further uſe of diuretics. I was afraid to puſh the Digitalis in ſo hazardous a ſubject, and therefore directed tinct. amara with tinct. canthar. and pills of ſquill, ſeneka, ſalt of tartar and gum ammoniac. Theſe medicines did not at all check the progreſs of the diſeaſe, and on the 26th it became neceſſary to give the Digitalis again. The pills were therefore repeated as before, and infuſ. amarum with fixed alkaly ordered to be taken twice a day. The event was as favorable as before; and from this time ſhe had no conſiderable return of dropſy, but languiſhed under various nameleſs ſymptoms, until the middle or end of November.

CASE CXXXIX.

Aug. 16th. Mrs. P—— of S——, Æt. 50. For a particular account of this patient, ſee Mr. Yonge's ſecond Caſe.

CASE CXL.

Sept. 20th, B—— B——, Eſq. A true ſpaſmodic aſthma of many years continuance. After every method of relief had failed; both under my management, and alſo under the direction of ſeveral of the ableſt phyſicians of this kingdom; I was induced to give

give him an infuſion of the Digitalis. It was continued until naufea came on, but procured no relief.

CASE CXLI.

October 5th. Mr. R——, Æt. 43. *(The patient mentioned at No.* 102.*)* He had purſued his former mode of life, and had now a return of his complaints, with evident marks of diſeaſed viſcera. His belly not very large, but uncommonly tenſe. From this circumſtance I did not expect the Digitalis to ſucceed, and therefore tried for ſome time to relieve him by the ſaline julep, with acet. ſcillitic. jallap, mercury, ſyrup of ſquill, with aq. cinnam. decoction of Dandelion, &c.; but theſe being adminiſtered without advantage, I was driven to the Digitalis. As he was very weak and much emaciated, I only gave two grains night and morning for five days. As no increaſe of urine took place, I uſed alkaline ſalt with tinct. cantharides:—This proving equally unſucceſsful, on the 18th, I directed two ounces of the infuſum Digitalis night and morning. This was continued until naufea took place, but the kidney ſecretion was not increaſed. Squill with opium, deobſtruents of different kinds, ſublimate ſolution, fixed alkaly, tobacco infuſion, were now ſucceſſively tried, but with the ſame want of ſucceſs. The fullneſs of his belly made it neceſſary to tap him, and by repeating this operation he continued alive to the end of the year.

CASE

CASE CXLII.

October 19th. Mrs. R——, of B——, Æt. 47. Suppoſed Aſthma, of eighteen months duration. She had kept her room for four months, and could not lie down without great diſturbance; was very thin, and had totally loſt all inclination for food. She was directed to take two gr. of pulv. fol. Digital. night and morning for five days, and infuſum amarum, at the hours of eleven and five. In the courſe of a week ſhe was much relieved, and could remain in bed all night. After a few days interval ſhe took the Digitalis for five days more, and was ſoon after that well enough to come down ſtairs and conduct her family affairs.

In *April* 1785, ſhe had a ſlight return, but not ſuch as to confine her to her chamber. She experienced the ſame relief from the ſame medicine, but continuing it for ſeven days without interruption, it excited naufea.

CASE CXLIII.

October 28th. Mr. A——, ſubject to nephritis calculoſa: After an attack of that kind, had ſtill a troubleſome ſenſe of weight about his loins, now and then riſing to pain, and a degree of dyſuria, together with a want of appetite. Theſe ſymptoms not readily yielding to the uſual methods of treatment, I directed an infuſion of Digitalis. The fourth doſe

cauſed

cauſed a copious flow of urine ; the ſixth made him ſick, and he was more or leſs ſick at times for three days ; but felt no more of his complaints.

I don't believe it is at all neceſſary to bring on ſickneſs in theſe caſes, but an unexpected abſence from town prevented me from ſeeing him time enough to ſtop the exhibition of the medicine.

CASE CXLIV.

October 31ſt. Mrs. C——, of W——, Æt. 67. Aſthma, and very thick hard legs of long continuance. The laſt month or two her breath worſe than uſual, her belly ſwollen, her thighs anaſarcous, and her urine in ſmall quantity. After trying garlic, ſquill, and purgatives without advantage, I directed the Digital. Infuſ. After taking about five ounces, her urine from thick and turbid, changed to clear and amber coloured, its quantity conſiderably increaſed, and her breathing eaſy. Contrary to my orders, but impelled by the relief ſhe had found, ſhe finiſhed the remaining three ounces of the infuſion, which made her very ſick, and the free flow of urine immediately ceaſed. No medicine was adminiſtered for a fortnight, during which time her complaints increaſed. I then directed an infuſion of tobacco, which affected her head, but did not increaſe her urine. She had recourſe again to the Digitalis infuſion, which once more removed the fulneſs of the belly, reduced the ſwellings of her thighs, and relieved her breath, but had no effect upon her legs.

CASE

CASE CXLV.

Nov. 2d. Miſs B—— of C——, Æt. 22. A very evident fluctuation in the abdomen, which was conſiderably diſtended, whilſt the reſt of her frame was greatly emaciated. The preſence of cough, hectic fever, and other circumſtances, made it probable that this apparent aſcites was cauſed by a purulent, and not a watery effuſion. However it was poſſible I might be miſtaken; the Digitalis was therefore given, but without any advantage.

The further progreſs of the diſeaſe confirmed my firſt opinion, and ſhe died conſumptive.

CASE CXLVI.

Nov. 4th. Mr. P—— of M——, Æt. 40. Subject to troubleſome nephritic complaints, and after the laſt attack did not recover, or void the gravelly concretions as uſual, a ſenſe of weight acroſs his loins continuing very troubleſome. The uſual medicines failing to relieve him, I ordered four grains of pulv. Digital. to be taken every other night for a week, and fifteen grains of mild fixed vegetable alkaly to be ſwallowed twice a day in barley water. He ſoon loſt all his complaints; but we muſt not in this caſe too haſtily attribute the cure to the Digitalis, as the alkaly has alſo been found a very uſeful medicine in ſimilar diſorders.

CASE

CASE CXLVII.

Nov. 4th. Mr. B—— of N——, Æt. 60. Had been much ſubject to gout, but his conſtitution being at length unable to form regular fits, he became dropſical. Pulv. fol. Digital. in doſes of two or three grains, at bed-time, gave him ſome relief, but did not perfectly empty him. About three months afterwards he had occaſion to take it again; but it then produced no effect, and he was ſo debilitated that it was not urged further.

CASE CXLVIII.

Nov. 8th. Mr. G——, Æt. 35. In the laſt ſtage of a phthiſis pulmonalis, was attacked with a moſt urgent and painful difficulty of breathing. Suſpecting this diſtreſs might ariſe from watery effuſion in the cheſt, I gave him Digitalis, which relieved him conſiderably; and during the remainder of his life his breath never became ſo bad again.

CASE CXLIX.

Nov. 13th. Mrs. A—— of W——h——, Æt. 68. One of thoſe rare caſes in which no urine is ſecreted. It proved as refractory as uſual to remedies, and not having ever ſucceeded in the cure of this diſeaſe, I determined to try the Digitalis. It was given in infuſion, and, after a few doſes, the ſecretion of a ſmall quantity of urine ſeemed to juſtify the attempt. The next day, however, the ſecretion

cretion ceaſed, nor could it be excited again, tho' at laſt the medicine was puſhed ſo as to occaſion ſickneſs, which continued at intervals for three days.

CASE CL.

Nov. 20th. Mrs. B——, Æt. 28. In the laſt ſtage of a pulmonary conſumption became dropſical. I directed three grains of the pulv. Digital. to be taken daily, one in the morning, and two at night. She took twenty grains without any ſenſible effect.

CASE CLI.

Nov. 23d. Maſter W——, Æt. 7. Suppoſed hydrocephalus internus. A grain of pulv. fol. Digitalis was directed night and morning. After three days, no ſenſible effects taking place, it was omitted, and the mercurial plan of treatment adopted. The child lived near five months afterwards. Upon diſſection near four ounces of water were found in the ventricles of the brain.

CASE CLII.

Nov. 26th. Mrs. W——, Æt. 65. I had attended this lady laſt winter in a very ſevere peripneumony, from which ſhe narrowly eſcaped with her life. When the cold ſeaſon advanced this winter, ſhe perceived a difficulty in breathing, which gradually became more and more troubleſome. I found

her much harraſſed by a cough, which occaſioned her to expectorate a little: the leaſt motion increaſed her dyſpnœa; ſhe could not lie down in bed; her legs were conſiderably ſwelled, her urine ſmall in quantity. I directed two grains of pulv. Digitalis made into a pill with gum ammoniac, to be taken every night, and to promote expectoration, a ſquill mixture twice in the day. Her urine in five days became clear and copious, and in a fortnight more ſhe loſt all her complaints, except a cough, for which ſhe took the lac ammoniacum.

It is not improbable that the ſquill might have ſome ſhare in this cure.

CASE CLIII.

December 7th. Mr. H——, Æt. 42. A large fat man, very ſubject to gravelly complaints. After an attack in the uſual manner, continued to feel numbneſs in his lower limbs, and a ſenſe of weight acroſs his loins. I directed infuſum Digitalis to be given every ſix hours. Six ounces made him ſick, and he took no more. The next day his urine increaſed, a good deal of ſand paſſed with it, and he loſt his diſagreeable feels, but the ſickneſs did not entirely ceaſe before the fourth day from its commencement.

CASE

CASE CLIV.

December 27th. Mr. B——, of H——, Æt. 55. Symptoms of hydrothorax, at firſt obſcurely, afterwards more diſtinctly marked. Many things were tried, but the ſquill alone gave relief. At length this failed. About the third month of the diſeaſe, a grain of pulv. Digital. was ordered to be taken night and morning. This produced the happieſt effects. In *March* following he had ſome ſlight ſymptoms of relapſe, which were ſoon removed by the ſame medicine, and he now enjoys good health. For a more particular narrative ſee caſe the firſt, communicated by Mr. Yonge.

CASE CLV.

December 31ſt. Mrs. B——, of E——, Æt. 50. An ovarium dropſy of long continuance. She took three grains of pulv. Digital. every night at bed time, for a fortnight, but without any effect.

CASE CLVI.

A poor man in this town, after his kidneys had ceaſed to ſecrete urine for ſeveral days, was ſeized with hickup, fits of vomiting, and tranſient delirium. After examination I was ſatisfied the diſeaſe was the ſame as that mentioned at CXLIX. A very experienced apothecary having tried various methods to relieve him, I deſpaired of any ſucceſs, but determined to try the Digitalis. It was accordingly given

in infuſion. At firſt it checked the vomitings, but did not occaſion any ſecretion of urine.

1785.

The caſes which have occurred to me in the courſe of this year, are numerous; but as the events of ſome of them are not yet ſufficiently aſcertained, I think it better to withhold them at preſent.

HOSPITAL CASES,

Under the Direction of the Author.

THE four following caſes were drawn out at my requeſt by Mr. Cha. Hinchley, late apothecary to the Birmingham Hoſpital. They are all the Hoſpital caſes for which the Digitalis was preſcribed by me, whilſt he continued in that office.

CASE CLVII.

March 15th, 1780. John Butler, Æt. 30. Aſthma and ſwelled legs. He was directed to take myrrh and ſteel every day, and three ſpoonfuls of infuſum Digitalis every night. On the 8th of April he was diſcharged, cured of the ſwellings and ſomething relieved of his aſthmatic affections.

CASE CLVIII.

November 18th, 1780. Henry Warren, Æt. 60. This man had a general anaſarca and aſcites, and was moreover ſo aſthmatic, that, neither being able to ſit in a chair nor lie in bed, he was obliged conſtantly to walk about, or to lean forward againſt a window or table. You preſcribed for him thus.

R. Aq. cinn. ſpt. ℥iv.
Oxymel. ſcillit.
Syr. ſcillit. aa. ℥i. m. cap. cochlear. larg. ſexta quaque horâ.

This medicine producing no increaſed diſcharge of urine, on the 25th you ordered the infuſion of Digitalis, two ſpoonfuls every four hours. After taking this for thirty ſix hours, his urine was diſcharged in very great quantity; his breath became eaſy, and the ſwellings diſappeared in a few days, though he took no more of the medicine. On the 2d of *December* he was ordered myrrh and lac ammoniacum, which he continued until the 23d, when he was diſcharged cured, and is now in good health.

CASE CLIX.

November 3d, 1781. Mary Crockett, Æt. 40. Aſcites and univerſal anaſarca. For one week ſhe took ſal. diureticus and tincture of cantharides, but without advantage. On the 10th you directed the infuſion of Digitalis, a dram and half to half a pint, an ounce to be taken every fourth hour. Before this quantity was quite finiſhed, the urine began to be diſcharged very copiouſly. The medicine was then ſtopped as you had directed. On the 15th, being coſtive, ſhe took a jallap purge, and on the 24th ſhe was diſcharged cured.

CASE CLX.

March 16th, 1782. Mary Bird, Æt. 61. Great fullneſs about the ſtomach; diſeaſed liver, and anaſarcous

ſarcous legs and thighs. For the firſt week ſquill was tried in more forms than one, but without advantage. On the 22d ſhe began with the Digitalis, which preſently removed all the ſwelling.

She was then put upon the uſe of aperient medicines and tonics, and on the firſt of *Auguſt* was diſcharged perfectly cured.

The three following Caſes were drawn up and communicated to me by Mr. Bayley, who ſucceeded Mr. Hinchley as apothecary to the Hoſpital at Birmingham:

DEAR SIR, Shiffnal, April 26th, 1785.

DURING my reſidence in the Birmingham General Hoſpital, I had frequent opportunities of ſeeing the great effects of the Digitalis in dropſy. As the exhibition of it was in the following inſtances immediately under your own direction, I have drawn them up for your inſpection, previous to your publiſhing upon that excellent diuretic. Of its efficacy in dropſy I have conſiderable evidence in my poſſeſſion, but conſider myſelf not at liberty to ſend you any other caſes except thoſe you had yourſelf the conduct of. The Digitalis is a very valuable acquiſition to medicine; and, I truſt, it will ceaſe to be dreaded when it is well underſtood.

I am, Sir, your obedient,
And very humble ſervant,
W. BAYLEY.

CASE

CASE CLXI.

Mary Hollis, aged 62, was admitted an out patient of the Birmingham General Hoſpital *February* 12th, 1784, labouring under all the effects of hydrothorax; her dread of ſuffocation during ſleep was ſo great, that ſhe always repoſed in an elbow chair. She was directed to take two grains of Digitalis in powder every night and morning, and for a few days found great relief; but, on the eighth day, as ſhe had complained of ſickneſs, and had been conſiderably purged, ſhe was ordered to deſiſt taking any more of her powders. On the 14th day ſhe was ordered an ounce of the following infuſion twice in a day: R. Fol. Digital. purp. ſicc. ʒiſs. aq. bullient. ℔ſs. digere per ſemi-horam, colaturæ adde tinct. aromatic ʒi. This infuſion did not purge, but ſometimes excited nauſea, though not ſufficient to prevent her from continuing its uſe. She grew gradually better, and on the 6th of *May* was diſcharged perfectly cured. The diuretic effects of the Digitalis were in this inſtance immediate.

CASE CLXII.

Edward James, Æt. 21. Admitted *March* 20th, 1784. Complained of great difficulty of breathing, pain in his head, and tightneſs about the ſtomach, with a trifling ſwelling of his legs. Ordered pil. ſcillit. ℈i. ter de die. On the third day his legs much more ſwelled, his breathing more difficult, and in every reſpect worſe; his pulſe very ſmall and

and quick, complained when he turned in bed, of ſomething like water rolling from one ſide of the thorax to the other. A remarkable blueneſs about the mouth and eyes, and purged conſiderably from the pil. ſcill. Ordered to omit the pills and to take ℥i. of infuſ. Digitalis every eight hours; the proportion ʒiſs. to eight ounces of water and ℥i. of aq. n. m. ſp.—7th Day, The infuſion had neither purged, nor vomited him: he only complained once or twice of giddineſs. His belly was now very hard, rather black on the right ſide the navel, and his legs amazingly ſwelled. Ordered a bolus with rhubarb and calomel, to be taken in the morning, and ℥ii. julep ſalin. cum tinct. canthar. gutt. forty ter die. —12th Day, nearly in the ſame ſtate, except his breathing which was ſomewhat more difficult, being now obliged to have his head conſiderably raiſed. Perſiſtat—From this day to the 32d day he became hourly worſe. His belly which at firſt was only hard, now evidently contained a large quantity of water, his legs were more ſwelled, and a large ſphacelated ſore appeared upon each outer ancle. Reſpiration was ſo much obſtructed, that he was obliged to ſit quite upright to prevent ſuffocation. He made very little water, not more than eight ounces in a day and a night, and was much emaciated. Ordered his purging bolus again, and ℥ii. of a mixture with ſal diuretic. ℥ſs. to ℥xii. three times in a day, and a poultice with ale grounds to his legs.

54th day. To this period there was not the leaſt probability of his exiſting; his legs and thighs were one

one continued blubber, his thorax quite flat, and his belly ſo large that it meaſured within one inch as much as a woman's in this Hoſpital the day ſhe was tapped, and from whom twenty ſeven pounds of coagulable lymph were taken. He made about three ounces of water in twenty-four hours: his penis and ſcrotum were aſtoniſhingly ſwelled, and no diſcharge from the ſores upon his legs. Ordered to take a pill with two grains of powdered Fox-glove night and morning. For a few days no ſenſible effect, but about the 60th day he complained of being continually giddy, and had ſome little pain in his ſtomach. He now made much more water, and dared to ſleep. His appetite which through the whole of his illneſs had been very bad, was alſo better. 66th day. Breathing very much relieved, the quantity of water he made was three chamber pots full in a day and a night, each pot containing two quarts and four ounces, moderately full. Ordered to continue his pills, and his legs which were very flabby, to be rolled.

69th day. His belly nearly reduced to its natural ſize, ſtill made a prodigious quantity of water, his appetite very good, habit of body rather lax, and his complexion ruddy. On the 2d of *June*, being ſtill rather weak, he was ordered decoct. cort. ℥ii. ter de die; and on the 12th was diſcharged from this Hoſpital perfectly cured.

W. BAYLEY.

Mr.

Mr. Bayley's reſpectful compliments to Doctor Withering: he ſends the caſe of Edward James, which he believes is pretty correct. He laments not having it in his power to ſend the meaſure of his belly, having unfortunately miſlaid the tape: he heard from James yeſterday, and he is perfectly well.

General Hoſpital, Auguſt 5, 1784.

CASE CLXIII.

On the 26th *February*, 1785, Sarah Ford, aged 42, was admitted an out-patient of the Birmingham General Hoſpital: ſhe complained of conſiderable pain in her cheſt, and great difficulty of breathing, her face was much ſwelled and her thighs and legs were anaſarcous. She had extreme difficulty in making water, and with many painful efforts ſhe did not void more than ſix ounces in twenty-four hours. She had been in this ſituation about ſix weeks, during which time ſhe had taken ammoniacum, olibanum, and large quantities of ſquills, without any other effect than frequent ſickneſs. Upon her commencing an Hoſpital patient, the following medicine was exhibited. R. gum ammoniac ʒii. pulv. fol. Digital. purp. ʒii. ſp. lavand. comp. ut fiat pil. 40. cap. ii. nocte maneque. She continued the uſe of theſe pills for a few days, without any ſenſible effect. On the eighth day her breathing was much relieved, her legs and thighs were not ſo much ſwelled, and in a day and a night

a night ſhe made five pints of water. By the 12th day her legs and thighs were nearly reduced to their natural ſize. She continued to make water in large quantities, and had loſt her pain in the thorax. To the 20th of *March*, ſhe made rapid advances towards health, when not a ſymptom of diſeaſe remaining, ſhe was diſcharged.

COMMU-

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CORRESPONDENTS.

London, Norfolk-ſtreet,
May 31ſt, 1785.

SIR,

I HAD the favour of your letter laſt week; and I ſhall be very happy if I can give you any intelligence relating to the Foxglove, that can anſwer the purpoſe in which you are ſo laudably engaged.

It is true that my brother, the late Dr. Cawley, was greatly relieved, and his life, perhaps, prolonged for a year, by a decoction of the Foxglove root; but why it had not a more laſting effect, it is neceſſary I ſhould tell you that he had all the ſigns of a diſtempered viſcera, long before any watery ſwellings appeared; it was manifeſt that his dropſy was merely ſymptomatic, and he could therefore only from time to time have any relief from medicine. In the year 1776, he returned from London to Oxon. having conſulted ſeveral phyſicians at the former place, and Dr. Vivian at the latter, but without any ſucceſs; and he was then told of a carpenter at Oxon. that had been cured of a Hydrops pectoris by the Foxglove root, and as he

was

was a younger, and in other reſpects an healthy man, his cure, I believe, remains a perfect one.

I did not attend my brother whilſt he took the medicine, and therefore I cannot ſpeak precifely to the operation of it; but I remember, by his letters, that he was dreadfully ſick and ill for ſeveral days before the ſecretion of urine came on, but which it did do to a great degree; relieved his breath, and greatly leſſened the ſwelling in his legs and thighs; but the two inſtances I have lately ſeen in this part of the world, are much ſtronger proofs of the efficacy of it than my brother's caſe.

I am, &c.

ROBERT CAWLEY.

N. B. Whenever I have another opportunity of giving the Foxglove, it ſhall be in ſmall doſes:—In which I ſhould hope it might ſucceed, although it might be more ſlowly. If you ſhould try it with ſucceſs, I ſhould be glad to know what mode you made uſe of.

Dr. Cawley's preſcription.

R. Rad. Digital. purpur. ſiccat. et contuſ. ℥ii.

Coque ex aq. font. ℔ii. ad ℔i. colat. liquor. adde aq. junip. comp. ℥ii.

Mell. anglic ℥i. m. ſumat cochl. iv. omni nocte h. ſ. et mane.

I have

—I have elſewhere remarked, that when the Digitalis has been properly given, and the diuretic effects produced, that an accidental over-doſe bringing on ſickneſs, has ſtopped the ſecretion of urine. In the preſent inſtance it likewiſe appears, that violent ſickneſs may be excited, and continue for ſeveral days without being accompanied by a flow of urine; and it is probable that the latter circumſtance did not take place, until the ſeverity of the former abated. If Dr. Cawley had not had a conſtitution very retentive of life, I think he muſt have died from the enormous doſes he took; and he probably would have died previous to the augmentation of the urinary diſcharge. For if the root from which his medicine was prepared, was gathered in its active ſtate, he did not take at each doſe leſs than *twelve* times the quantity a ſtrong man ought to have taken. Shall we wonder then that patients refuſe to repeat ſuch a medicine, and that practitioners tremble to preſcribe it? Were any of the active and powerful medicines in daily uſe to be given in doſes *twelve* times greater than they are, and theſe doſes to be repeated without atttention to the effects, would not the patients die, and the medicines be condemned as dangerous and deleterious?—Yet ſuch has been the fate of Foxglove!

A Letter

A Letter to the Author, from Mr. Boden, Surgeon, at Broſeley, in Shropſhire.

Dear Sir, Broſeley, 25th May, 1785.

HAVE incloſed the preſcriptions that contained the fol. Digital. which I gave to Thomas Cooke and Thomas Roberts.

Thomas Cooke, Æt. 49, had been ill about two or three weeks. When I ſaw him he had no appetite, and a conſtant thirſt: a fullneſs and load in the ſtomach: the thighs, legs and hands, much ſwell'd, and the face and throat in a morning; was coſtive, and made but little water, which was high coloured; the pulſe very weak, and his breath exceeding bad. *June* 17th. R. Argent. viv ʒi. conſ. cynoſbat. ʒii. fol. Digital. pulv. gr. xv. f. pil. xxiv. capt. ii. omni nocte horâ decubitus. He was likewiſe purged by a bolus of argent. viv. jallap, Digit. elaterium and calomel, which was repeated on the fourth day, to the third time. From *June* 17th to the 29th, the ſymptoms were moſtly removed, making water freely, and having plenty of ſtools; in a week after he was perfectly well, and remains ſo ever ſince. The cure was finiſhed by ſteel and bitters.

Thomas Roberts, Æt. 40, had a deformed cheſt, was obliged to be almoſt in an erect poſture when in bed; the other ſymptoms were nearly the ſame as Cooke's. *Auguſt* 3d. The pills preſcribed *June* 17th

17th for Cooke.——17th. A purging bolus of jalap and Digitalis, once a week. He continued the medicines till the latter end of *Auguſt*, when he got very well; but the complaint returned in *Jan.* worſe than before. He is now much better, but I have great reaſon to believe the liver to be diſeaſed.

I am, with the greateſt reſpect,

Your very obliged humble ſervant,

DANIEL BODEN.

P. S. The ſecond patient, on his relapſe, took Digitalis again, combined with other things.

CASE communicated by Mr. CAUSER, Surgeon, at Stourbridge, Worceſterſhire.

Mr. P—— of H—— M——, in the pariſh of Kingſwinford, aged about 60; had been a ſtrong healthy, robuſt, corpulent man; worked hard early in life at edge-tool making, and drank freely of ſtrong malt liquor; for many years had been ſubject to gout in the extremities; for a few years paſt had been very aſthmatic, and the gout in the extremities gradually decreaſed. When I firſt ſaw him, which was *Sept.* 12, 1779, his legs were anaſarcous, his belly much ſwelled, and an evident fluctuation of water. His breathing very bad, an irregular pulſe, and unable to lie down. His eaſieſt

poſture was ſtanding with his body leaning over a chair, in which ſituation he would continue many hours together, labouring for breath, with the ſweat trickling down his face very profuſely; the urine in very ſmall quantity. Diuretics of every kind I could think of were uſed with very little or no advantage. Bliſters applied to the legs relieved very conſiderably for a time, but by no means could I increaſe the urinary diſcharge. Warm ſtomachic medicines were given, and at the ſame time ſinapiſms applied to the feet, in hopes of enticing gout to the extremities, but without any good effect.—*November* 22d. The ſwelling conſiderably increaſing, an emetic of acet. ſcillitic. was given, which acted very violently, and increaſed the urinary diſcharge conſiderably. He continued better and worſe, uſing different kinds of diuretic and expectorating medicines until *September* 1781, when the diſeaſe was ſo much worſe, I did not expect he could live many days. The acet. ſcillitic. was repeated, a table ſpoonful every half hour, till it acted briſkly upwards and downwards; but without increaſing the urinary diſcharge.—On the 17th of *September* I infuſed ʒiii. of the fol. Digitalis in ʒvi. of boiling water, for four hours; then ſtrained it, and added ʒi. of tinct. aromatica.—On the 18th he began by taking one ſpoonful, which he was to repeat every half hour, till it made him very ſick, unleſs giddineſs, loſs of ſight, or any other diſgreeable effect took place. I had never given the medicine before, and had prepared him to expect the operation to be very ſevere. I ſaw him again on the 21ſt; he had

had taken the medicine regularly, till the whole quantity was consumed, without perceiving the least effect of any kind from it, and continued well till the evening of the following day, when a little sickness took place, which increased, but never so as to occasion either vomiting or purging, but a surprising discharge of urine. The saliva increased so as to run out of his mouth, and a watery discharge from his eyes; these discharges continued, with a continual sickness, till the swelling was totally gone, which happened in three or four days. He afterwards took steel and bitters; and continued very comfortably, without any return of his dropsy, until the the 7th of *April* 1782, when he was seized with an epidemic cough, which was very frequent with us at that time. His swellings now returned very rapidly, with the greatest difficulty in breathing, and he died in a few days. Blisters and expectorating medicines were used on this last return.

Extract of a Letter from Mr. CAUSER.

Mrs. S——, the subject of the following Case, was as ill as it is possible for woman to be and recover; from the inefficacy of the medicines used, I am convinced no medicine would have saved her but the Digitalis. I never saw so bad a case recovered; and it shews, that in the most reduced state of body, the medicine in small doses, will prove safe and efficacious.

N. B. The Digitalis, in pills, never occaſioned the leaſt ſickneſs. She took two boxes of them.

C A S E.

January, 2d, 1785. Mrs. S——, of W——, near Kidderminſter, aged 38, has been affected with dropſical ſwellings of her legs and thighs, about ſix weeks, which have gradually grown worſe; has now great difficulty in breathing, which is much increaſed on moving; a very irregular, intermittent pulſe, urine in very ſmall quantity, and in the ſeventh month of her pregnancy: a woman of very delicate conſtitution, with tender lungs from her infancy, and very ſubject to long continued coughs.

R. Pulv. ſcillæ gr. iii.
Jalap gr. x. ſyr. roſar. ſolut. tinct. ſenn. aa ʒii. aq. menth. v. ſimpl. ℥iſs. ni. mane ſumend.

R. pulv. ſcillæ ℈i. G. ammoniac. ſapon. venet. aa ʒiſs. ſyr. q. ſ. f. pilul. 42 cap. iii. nocte maneque.

On the 7th found her worſe, and the ſwelling increaſed; the urine about ℥x in the twenty-four hours.

R. Fol. ſiccat. Digital. ʒiii. coque in. aq. fontan. ℥xii. ad ℥vi. cola et adde. aq. juniper. comp. ℥ii. ſacchar. alb. ℥ſs. m. cap. cochlear. i. larg. 4tis horis.

She

She took about three parts of the medicine before any effect took place. The firſt was ſickneſs, ſucceeded by a conſiderable diſcharge of urine. She continued the medicine till the whole was conſumed, which cauſed a good deal of ſickneſs for three or four days.

I ſaw her again on the 12th. The quantity of urine was much increaſed, and the ſwelling diminiſhed. Pulſe and breathing better.

R. Fol. ficc. Digital. G. aſſafetid. aa ʒi. calomel. pp. gr. x. ſp. lavand. comp. q. ſ. fiat pilul. xxxii. cap. ii. omni nocte horâ ſomni.

A plentiful diſcharge of urine attended the uſe of theſe pills, and ſhe got perfectly free from her dropſical complaints.

March 15th ſhe was delivered: had a good labour, was treated as is uſual, except in not having her breaſts drawn, not intending ſhe ſhould ſuckle her child, being in ſo reduced a ſtate. Continued going on well till the 18th, when ſhe was ſeized with very violent pains acroſs her loins, at times ſo violent as to make her cry out as much as labour pains. Enema cathartic. Fot. papav. applied to the part.

R. Pulv. ipecacoan. gr. vi. opii. gr. iv. ſyr. q. ſ. fiat pilul. vi. capt. i. 2da quaque horâ durante dolore.

R. Julep. e camphor. ſp. minder. aa ℥ii. capt. cochlear. i. larg. poſt ſingul. pilul.

19th. Breathing ſhort, unable to lie down, very irregular low pulſe ſcarcely to be felt, fainty, and a univerſal cold ſweat: no appetite nor thirſt, ſpaſmodic pains at times acroſs the loins very violent, but not ſo frequent as on the preceding day.

R. Gum ammoniac. aſſafetid. aa ʒi. camphor. gr. xii. fiat pilul. 24. capt. ii. ʒtia quaque horâ in cochlear. ii. mixtur. ſeq.

R. Balſam. peruv. ʒiii. mucilag. G. arab. q. ſ. flor. zinci g. vi. aq. menth. ſimp. ℔ſs. m.

Applic. Emp. veſicat. ſemorib. internis.

R. Sp. vol. fœtid. elixir. paregor. balſam. Traumatic. aa ʒiii. capt. cochlear. parv. urgente languore.

20th. Much the ſame; makes very little water, and the legs begin to ſwell.—Applic. Emp. e pice burgund. lumbis.

23d. The ſwelling very much increaſed.—Capt. gutt. xv. acet. ſcillitic. ter die in two ſpoonfuls of the following mixture.

R. Infuſ. baccar. juniper. ℥vi. tinct. amar. tinct. ſtomachic. aa ʒi. m.

25th.

25th. Much the ſame.

28th. The ſwelling conſiderably increaſed, in other reſpects very much the ſame.

30th. Breathing very bad, with cough and pain acroſs the ſternum, unable to lie down, legs, thighs, and body very much ſwelled, urine not more than four or five ounces in the twenty-four hours; hot and feveriſh, with thirſt.

Applic. Emp. veſicat. ſtomacho et ſterno.

R. G. aſſafetid. ℈ii. pulv. jacob. ℈i. rad. ſcill. recent. gr. xii. extract. thebaic. gr. iv. f. pilul. xvi. cap. iv. omni nocte.

R. Sal. nitr. ſal. diuretic. aa ʒii. pulv. e contrayerv. comp. ʒi. ſacchar. ℥i. emulſ. commun. ℔i. aq. cinnam. ſimpl. ℥i. m. capt. cochlear. iv. ter die.

April 2d. Much the ſame, no increaſe of urine.

3d. Breathing much relieved by the bliſter, which runs profuſely. Repeated the medicines, and continued them till the

12th. The cough very bad, pulſe irregular, ſwelling much increaſed, urine in very ſmall quantity, not at all increaſed; great lowneſs and fainting. She deſired to have ſome of the pills which relieved her

her ſo much when with child. I was almoſt afraid to give them, but the inefficacy of the other medicines gave me no hopes of a cure from continuing them, which made me venture to comply with her requeſt.

R. Fol. ſiccat. Digital. G. aſſafetid. aa ʒi. ſp. lavand. comp. q. ſ. f. pilul. xxxii. cap. ii. omni mane; et omni nocte cap. pilul. e ſtyrace gr. vi.

17th. Conſiderable increaſe of urine.

21ſt. Swelling a good deal diminiſhed; urine near four pints in twenty-four hours, which is more than double the quantity ſhe drinks.

Applic. Emp. veſicat. femoribus internis.

The Digitalis pills and opiate at bed-time continued. Takes a tea cup of cold chamomile tea every morning.

25th. Swelling much diminiſhed, makes plenty of water, appetite much mended, cough and breathing better. She omitted the medicine for three days; the urine began to diminiſh, the ſwelling and ſhortneſs of breathing worſe. On repeating it for two days, the diſcharge was again augmented, and a diminution of the ſwelling ſucceeded. She has continued the pills ever ſince till the 14th of *May;*

May; the dropſical ſymptoms and cough are entirely gone, the water is in ſufficient quantity, her ſtrength is recovered, and ſhe has a good appetite. All ſhe now complains of is a weight acroſs her ſtomach, which is worſe at times, and ſhe thinks, unleſs it can be removed, ſhe ſhall have a return of her dropſy.

Extract of a Letter from Doctor FOWLER, Phyſician, at Stafford.

I UNDERSTAND you are going to publiſh on the Digitalis, which I am glad to hear, for I have long wiſhed to ſee your ideas in print about it, and I know of no one (from the great attention you have paid to the ſubject) qualified to treat on it but yourſelf. There are gentlemen of the faculty who give verbal directions to poor patients, for the preparing and taking of an infuſion or decoction of the green plant. Would one ſuppoſe that ſuch gentlemen had ever attended to the nature and operation of a ſedative power on the functions, *particularly* the *vital?* Is not ſuch a vague and unſcientific mode of proceeding putting a two edged ſword into the the hands of the ignorant, and the moſt likely method to damn the reputation of any very active and powerful medicine? And is it not more than probable that the *neglect* of adhereing to a *certain* and *regular* preparation of the nicotiana, and the *want* (of what you *emphatically* call) a *practicable* doſe, have been the chief cauſes of the once riſing reputation of that

that noted plant being damned above a century ago? In ſhort, the Digitalis is beginning to be uſed in dropſies, (although ſome patients are ſaid to go off ſuddenly under its adminiſtration) ſomewhat in the ſtyle of broom aſhes; and, in my humble opinion, the public, at this very inſtant, ſtand in great need of your *precepts*, *guards*, and *cautions* towards the ſafe and ſucceſsful uſe of ſuch a powerful ſedative diuretic; and I have no doubt of your minute attention to thoſe particulars, from a regard to the good and welfare of mankind, as well as to your own reputation with reſpect to that medicine.

I remember an officer in the Staffordſhire militia, who died here of a dropſy five years ago. The Digitalis relieved him a number of times in a wonderful manner, ſo that in all probability he might have obtained a radical cure, if he would have refrained from hard drinking. I underſtood it was firſt ordered for him by a medical gentleman, and its ſedative effects proved ſo mild, and diuretic operation ſo powerful, that he uſed to prepare it afterwards for himſelf, and would take it with as little ceremony as he would his tea. It is ſaid, that he was ſo certain of its ſucceſsful operation, that he would boaſt to his bacchanalian companions, when much ſwelled, you ſhall ſee me in two days time quite another man.

CASES

CASES communicated by Mr. J. FREER, jun. Surgeon, in Birmingham.

CASE I.

Nov. 1780. Mary Terry, aged 60. Had been ſubject to aſthma for ſeveral years; after a ſevere fit of it her legs began to ſwell, and the quantity of urine to diminiſh. In ſix weeks ſhe was much troubled with the ſwellings in her thighs and abdomen, which decreaſed very little when ſhe lay down: ſhe made not quite a pint of water in the twenty-four hours. I ordered her to take two ſpoonfuls of the infuſion of Foxglove every three hours. By the time ſhe had taken eight doſes her urine had increaſed to the quantity of two quarts in the day and night, but as ſhe complained of nauſea, and had once vomited, I ordered the uſe of the medicine to be ſuſpended for two days. The nauſea being then removed, ſhe again had recourſe to it, but at intervals of ſix hours. The urine continued to diſcharge freely, and in three weeks ſhe was perfectly cured of her ſwellings.

CASE II.

December, 1782. A poor woman, who had been afflicted with an ague during the whole of her pregnancy, and for two months with dropſical ſwellings of the feet, legs, thighs, abdomen, and labia pudenda; was at the expiration of the ſeventh month taken

taken in labour. On the day after her delivery the ague returned, with ſo much violence as to endanger her life. As ſoon as the fit left her, I began to give her the red bark in ſubſtance, which had the deſired effect of preventing another paroxyſm. She continued to recover her health for a fortnight, but did not find any diminution in the ſwellings; her legs were now ſo large as to oblige her to keep conſtantly on the bed, and ſhe made very little water. I ordered her the infuſion of Foxglove three times a day, which, on the third day, produced a very copious diſcharge of urine, without any ſickneſs; ſhe continued the uſe of it for ten days, and was then able to walk. Having loſt all her ſwellings, and no complaint remaining but weakneſs, the bark and ſteel compleated the cure.

Extract of a Letter from Doctor JONES, Phyſician, in Lichfield.

ANXIOUS to procure authentic accounts from the patients, to whom I gave the Foxglove, I have unavoidably been delayed in anſwering your laſt favour. However, I hope the delay will be made up by the efficacy of the plant being confirmed by the enquiry. Long caſes are tedious, and ſeldom read, and as ſeldom is it neceſſary to deſcribe every ſymptom; for every caſe would be a hiſtory of dropſy. I ſhall therefore content myſelf with ſpecifying

fying the nature of the diſeaſe, and when the dropſy is attended with any other affection ſhall notice it.

Two years have ſcarcely elapſed ſince I firſt employed the Digitalis; and the ſucceſs I have had has induced me to uſe it largely and frequently.

CASE I.

Ann Willott, 50 years of age, became a patient of the Diſpenſary on the 11th of April 1783. She then complained of an enlargement of the abdomen, difficulty of breathing, particularly when lying, and coſtiveneſs. She paſſed ſmall quantities of high-coloured urine; and had an evident fluctuation in the belly. Her legs were œdematous. Chryſtals of tartar, ſquills, &c. had no effect. The 13th of *June* ſhe took two ſpoonfuls of a decoction of Foxglove, containing three drams of the dry leaves, in eight ounces, three times a day. Her urine ſoon increaſed, and in a few days ſhe paſſed it freely, which continued, and her breath returned.

CASE II.

Mr. ———, 45 years of age, had been long ſubject to dropſical ſwellings of the legs, and made little water. Two ſpoonfuls of the ſame decoction twice a day, ſoon relieved him.

CASE

CASE III.

Mrs. ——, aged 70 years. A lady frequently afflicted with the gout, and an aſthmatical cough. After a long continuance of the latter, ſhe had a great diminution of urine, and conſiderable difficulty of breathing, particularly on motion, or when lying. Her body was much bound. There was, however, no apparent ſwelling. She took three ſpoonfuls of an aperient decoction of forty-five grains in ſix ounces and a half, every other morning. The urine was plentiful thoſe days, and her breathing much relieved. In two or three weeks after the uſe of it ſhe was perfectly reſtored. The purgative medicine neither increaſed the urine, nor relieved the breathing, till the Foxglove was added.

This ſpring ſhe long laboured with the gout in her ſtomach, which terminated in a fit in her hand. During the whole of this tedious illneſs, of nearly three months, ſhe paſſed little urine, and her breathing was again ſhort.

She took the ſame preparation of Foxglove without any diuretic effect, and afterwards two and three grains of the powder twice a day with as little. The dulcified ſpirits of vitriol, however, quickly promoted the urinary ſecretion.

CASE

CASE IV.

Mr. C——, 46 years of age, had dropſical ſwellings of the legs, and paſſed little urine. He took the decoction with three drams, and was ſoon relieved.

CASE V.

Lady ———, took three grains of the dried leaves twice a day, for ſwelled legs, and ſcantineſs of urine, without effect.

CASE VI.

Mrs. Slater, aged 36 years. For dropſy of the belly and legs, and ſcantineſs of urine, of ſeveral weeks ſtanding, took three grains of the powder twice a day, and was quite reſtored in ten days. She took many medicines without effect.

CASE VII.

Mrs. P———, in her 70th year, took three grains of the powder twice a day, for ſcantineſs of urine, and ſwelled legs, without effect.

CASE VIII.

Ann Winterleg, in her 26th year, had dropſical ſwellings of the legs, and paſſed little urine: ſhe was relieved by two drams, in an eight ounce decoction.

CASE

CASE IX.

William Brown, aged 76. In the laſt ſtage of dropſy of the belly and legs, found a conſiderable increaſe of his urine by a decoction of Foxglove, but it was not permanent.

CASE X.

Mr.———, — years of age, and of very groſs habit of body, became highly dropſical, and took various medicines, without effect. One ounce of the decoction, with three drams of the dry leaves in eight ounces, twice or three times a day, increaſed his urine prodigiouſly. He was evidently better, but a little attendant naufea overcame his reſolution, and in the courſe of ſome weeks afterwards he fell a victim to his obſtinacy.

CASE XI.

Mrs. Smith, about 50 years of age, after a tedious illneſs of many weeks, had a jaundice, and became dropſical in the legs. Two ſpoonfuls of the decoction, with three drams twice a day, increaſed her urine, and abated the ſwelling.

CASE XII.

Widow Chatterton, about 60 years of age. Took the decoction in the ſame way for dropſy of the legs, with little effect.

CASE

CASE XIII.

——— Genders, about thirty-four years of age, was delivered of three children, and became dropſical of the abdomen. She paſſed little or no urine, had conſtant thirſt, and no appetite. She took two ſpoonfuls of an eight ounce decoction, with three drams twice a day. By the time ſhe had finiſhed the bottle, (which muſt have been on the fourth day,) ſhe had evacuated all her water, and could go about. Her appetite increaſed with every doſe, and ſhe recovered without farther help.

CASE XIV.

Miſs M—— M——, in her 20th year. Had been infirm from her cradle, and, after various ſufferings, had an aſtoniſhing œdematous ſwelling of one leg and thigh, of many weeks ſtanding. She paſſed little or no urine, and had all her other complaints. She took 2 ſpoonfuls of an eight oz. decoction of two drams, twice a day. Her urine immediately increaſed; and, on the third day, the ſwelling had entirely ſubſided.

CASE XV.

Mr. P——, 65 years of age, and of a full habit of body. Had lived freely in his youth, and for many years led rather an inactive life. His health was much impaired ſeveral months, and he had a conſiderable diſtention, and evident fluctuation in

the abdomen, and a very great œdema of the legs and thighs. His breathing was very ſhort, and rather laborious, appetite bad, and thirſt conſiderable. His belly was bound, and he paſſed very ſmall quantities of high-coloured urine, that depoſited a reddiſh matter. He had taken medicines ſome time, and, I believe, the Digitalis; and had been better.

A bliſter was applied to the upper and inſide of each thigh; he took two ſpoonfuls of the decoction, with three drams of the dry leaves, two or three times a day; and ſome opening phyſic occaſionally.

He lived at a conſiderable diſtance, and I did not viſit him a ſecond time; but I was well informed, about ten days or a fortnight afterwards, that his urine increaſed amazingly upon taking the decoction, and that the water was entirely evacuated.

CASE XVI.

Mrs. G——, aged 50 years. After being long ailing, had a large collection of water in the abdomen and lower extremities. Her urine was high-coloured, in ſmall quantities, and had a reddiſh ſediment. She took the decoction of Digitalis, ſquills, &c. without any effect. The chryſtals of tartar, however, cured her ſpeedily.

CASE

CASE XVII.

Mr. ———, about 50 years of age, complained of great tenſion and pain acroſs the abdomen, and of loſs of appetite; his urine, he thought, was leſs than uſual, but the difference was ſo trifling he could ſpeak with no certainty: his belly ſeemed to fluctuate. Among other things he tried the Fox-glove leaves dried, twice a day; and, although it appeared to afford him relief, yet the effect was not permanent.

CASE XVIII.

Mr. W———, aged between 60 and 70 years; and rather corpulent: was conſiderably dropſical, both of the belly and legs, and his urine in ſmall quantities. Three grains of the dry leaves, twice a day, evacuated the water in leſs than a fortnight.

CASE XIX.

Sarah Taylor, 40 years of age, was admitted into the Diſpenſary for dropſy of the abdomen and legs; and was relieved by the Decoctum digitalianum.

CASE XX.

Lydia Smith, aged 60. Diſpenſary. Laboured many years under an aſthma, and became dropſical. She took the decoction without effect.

CASE XXI.

John Leadbeater, aged 15 years. Had a quotidian intermittent, which was removed by the humane aſſiſtance of an amiable young lady. His intermittent was ſoon attended by a very conſiderable aſcites; for which he became a patient of the Diſpenſary. He took a decoction of Foxglove night and morning. His urine increaſed immediately, and he loſt all his complaints in four days.

CASE XXII.

William Millar, aged 50 years. Admitted into the Diſpenſary for a tertian ague, and general dropſy. The dropſy continuing after the ague was removed, and his urine being ſtill paſſed in ſmall quantities; he took the powdered leaves, and recovered his health in five days.

CASE XXIII.

Ann Wakelin, 10 years of age. Had for ſeveral weeks a dropſy of the belly after an ague. She took a decoction of Foxglove, which removed all complaint by the fourth day.

CASE XXIV.

Ann Meachime; a Diſpenſary patient. Had an aſcites and ſcantineſs of urine. She took the powder

der of Foxglove, and evacuated all her water in three days.

It may not be improper to obſerve, 1ſt. That various diuretics had long been given in many of theſe caſes before I was conſulted. And, 2dly. That the exhibition of the Foxglove was but ſeldom attended with ſickneſs.

REMARKS.

Theſe Caſes, thus liberally communicated by my friend, Dr. Jones, are more acceptable, as they ſeem to contain a faithful abſtract from his notes, both of the unſucceſsful as well as the ſucceſsful Caſes.

The following Tabular View of them will give us ſome Idea of the efficacy of the Medicine.

Anaſarca - - - -	7 Caſes -	Cured - -	3
		Relieved -	1
		Failed - -	3
Aſcites - - - -	5 Caſes -	Cured - -	4
		Relieved -	1
Œdematous leg - -	1 Caſe -	Cured - -	1
Aſcites and anaſarca -	7 Caſes -	Cured - -	4
		Relieved -	2
		Failed - -	1
Aſthma and dropſy -	1 Caſe -	Failed - -	1
Hydrothorax and gout	1 Caſe -	Cured - -	1
- - - - -, aſcites and anaſarca - -	2 Caſes -	Cured - -	2

A CASE of Anaſarca communicated by Mr. JONES, Surgeon, in Birmingham.

Dear SIR,

HAVING lately experienced the diuretic powers of the Foxglove, in a caſe of anaſarca; I do myſelf the pleaſure of communicating a ſhort hiſtory of the treatment to you.

I am, &c.

Birmingham, May 17th, 1785. W. JONES.

My patient, Mrs. C———, who is in her 51ſt year, had the following ſymptoms, viz. alternate ſwelling of the legs and abdomen, a little cough, ſhortneſs of breath in a morning, thirſt, weak pulſe, and her urine, which was ſo ſmall in quantity as ſeldom to amount to half a pint in twenty-four hours, depoſited a clay-coloured ſediment.

April 16th, 1785, I directed the following form:

R. Fol. Digitalis ſiccat. ʒii.
Aq. fontanæ bullient. ℥viii. f. infuſ. et cola.
Sumat cochl. larga iii. o. n. et mane.

On the 17th ſhe had taken twice of the infuſion, and though by miſtake only two tea ſpoonfuls for a doſe,

doſe, yet the quantity of urine was increaſed to about a pint in the twenty-four hours. She was then directed to take two table ſpoonfuls night and morning. And,

On the 18th, a degree of nauſea was produced. A pint and half of urine was made in the laſt twenty-four hours. During the time above ſpecified ſhe had two or three ſtools every day. The infuſion was now omitted.

On the 19th the ſwelling of the legs was removed. A degree of nauſea took place in the morning, and increaſed ſo much during the day, that ſhe vomitted up all her food and medicine. As ſhe was very low, and complained of want of appetite, a cordial julep was directed to be taken occaſionally, as well as red port and water, mint tea, &c. She informed me that whatever ſhe took generally ſtaid about an hour before it came up again, and that the mint tea ſtaid longeſt on the ſtomach. The vomiting decreaſed gradually, and ceaſed on the 22d. The diſcharge of urine remained conſiderable during the three following days, but its quantity was not meaſured.

22d. A doſe of neutral ſaline julep was directed to be taken every fourth hour.

On the 23d ſhe complained of thirſt, and thought the diſcharge of urine not ſo copious as on the preceding days, therefore the ſaline julep was continued

ed every fourth hour, with the addition of thirty drops of the following medicine:

R. Aceti ſcillitic. ʒvi.
Tinct. arómat. ʒii.
Tinct. thebaic. gutt. xx. m.

The bowels have been kept open from the 19th, by the occaſional uſe of emollient injections.

On the 24th the legs were much ſwelled again; ſhe complained of languor and a degree of nauſea. The diſcharge of urine increaſed a little ſince the 23d. Her pulſe was low and her tongue white. The urine, which had been rendered clear by the infuſion of Foxglove, now depoſited a whitiſh ſediment.

On the 25th her appetite began to return, the ſwelling of the legs diminiſhed, and ſhe thought herſelf much relieved. The urine was conſiderable in quantity, and clear.

On the 26th ſhe was thirſty and languid. The ſwelling was removed; the quantity of urine diſcharged in the laſt twenty-four hours was about a pint. She continued to mend from this time, and is now in good health.

A giddineſs of the head, more or leſs remarkable at times, was obſerved to follow the uſe of the Foxglove, and it laſted nine or ten days.

This

This is the ſecond time that I have relieved this patient by the infuſion of Foxglove. I uſed the ſame proportion of the freſh leaves the firſt time as I did of the dried ones the laſt. The violent vomiting which followed the uſe of the infuſion made with the dried leaves, did not take place with the freſh, though ſhe took near a pint made with the ſame proportion of the herb freſh gathered.

REMARKS.

THE above is a very inſtructive caſe, as it teaches us how ſmall a quantity of the infuſion was neceſſary to effect every deſirable purpoſe. At firſt ſight it may appear from the concluding paragraph, that the green leaves ought to be preferred to the dried ones, as being ſo much milder in their operation; but let it be noticed, that the ſame quantity of infuſion was prepared from the ſame weight of the green as of the dried leaves, and conſequently, as will appear hereafter, the infuſion with the dried leaves was five times the ſtrength of that before prepared from the green ones. We need not wonder, therefore, that the effects of the former were ſo diſagreeable, when the doſe was five times greater than it ought to have been. But what makes this matter ſtill more obvious, is the miſtake mentioned at firſt, of two tea ſpoonfuls only being given for a doſe. Now a tea ſpoonful, containing about a fourth or a fifth part of the contents of a table ſpoon, the doſe then given, was very nearly the ſame as that which had before been taken of the infuſion

infuſion of the green leaves, and it produced preciſely the ſame effects for it increaſed the urinary diſcharge, without exciting the violent vomiting.

Letter from Doctor JOHNSTONE, Phyſician, in Birmingham.

Dear SIR,

THE following caſes are ſelected from many others in which I have given the Digitalis purpurea; and from repeated experience of its efficacy after other diuretics have failed, I can recommend it as an effectual, and when properly managed, a ſafe medicine.

I am, &c.

Birmingham, May 26, 1785. E. JOHNSTONE.

March 8th, 1783, I was called to attend Mr. G——, a gentleman of a robuſt habit, who had led a regular and temperate life, Æt. 68. He was affected with great difficulty of reſpiration, and cough particularly troubleſome on attempting to lie down, œdematous ſwellings of the legs and thighs, abdomen tenſe and ſore on being preſſed, pain ſtriking from the pit of the ſtomach to the back and ſhoulders; almoſt conſtant naufea, eſpecially after taking food, which he frequently threw up; water thick and high-coloured, paſſed with difficulty and in ſmall

ſmall quantity; body coſtive; pulſe natural; face much emaciated, eyes yellow and depreſſed. He had been ſubject to cough and difficulty of breathing in the winter for ſeveral years; and about four years before this time, after being expoſed to cold, was ſuddenly deprived of his ſpeech and the uſe of the right ſide, which he recovered as the warm weather came on; but ſince that time had been remarkably coſtive, and was in every reſpect much debilitated. He firſt perceived his legs ſwell about a year ago; by the uſe of medicines and exerciſe, the ſwellings ſubſided during the ſummer, but returned on the approach of winter, and gradually increaſed to the ſtate in which I found them, notwithſtanding he had uſed different preparations of ſquills and a great variety of other diuretic medicines. I ordered the following mixture.

R. Foliorum Digitalis purpur. recent. ʒiii. decoque ex aq. fontan. ℥xii ad ℥vi colaturæ adde Tinctur. aromatic.
Syr. zinzib. aa ʒi. m. capt. cochl. duo larga ſecunda quaque hora ad quartam vicem niſi prius nauſea ſupervenerit.

March 9th. He took four doſes of the mixture without being in the leaſt ſick, and made, during the night upwards of two quarts of natural coloured water.

10th.

10th. Took the remainder of the mixture yeſterday afternoon and evening, and was ſick for a ſhort time, but made nearly the ſame quantity of water as before, the ſwellings are conſiderably diminiſhed, his appetite increaſed, but he is ſtill coſtive.

R. Argent. viv. balſam peruv. aa ʒſs tere ad extinctionem merc. et adde gum. ammon. ℈iii aloes ſocotorin. ʒſs rad. ſcil. recent. ℈ſs ſyr. ſimpl. q. ſ. f. maſs. in pil. xxxii divid. cap. iii. bis in die.

14th. Continues to make water freely. The ſwellings of his legs have gradually decreaſed; forenefs and tenſion of the abdomen conſiderably leſs.

Omittant. pil. cap. miſtur. c. decoct. Digitalis. &c. 3tia quaque hora ad 3tiam vicem.

15th. Made a pint and a half of water laſt night, without being in the leaſt ſick, and is in every reſpect conſiderably better. Repet. Pillul. ut antea.

21ſt. Makes water as uſual when in health, and the ſwellings are entirely gone.

R. Infus. amar. ℥v. tinctur. Rhei ſpirit. ℥ii. ſpirit vitriol. dulc. ʒii. ſyr. zinzib. ʒvi. m. cap. cochl. iii. larg. ter in die.

He ſoon gained ſufficient ſtrength to enable him to go a journey, and returned home in much better health

health than he had been from the time he was affected with the paralytic ſtroke, and excepting ſome return of his aſthmatic complaint in the winter, hath continued ſo ever ſince.

CASE II.

R—— Howgate, a man much addicted to intemperance, particularly in the uſe of ſpirituous liquors, Æt. 60, was admitted into the Hoſpital near Birmingham, *May* 17, 1783. He complained of difficulty of breathing, attended with cough, particularly troubleſome on lying down; drowſineſs and frequent dozing, from which he was roufed by ſtartings, accompanied with great anxiety and oppreſſion about the breaſt; œdematous ſwellings of the legs; conſtant deſire to make water, which he paſſed with difficulty, and only by drops; pulſe weak and irregular; body rather coſtive; face much emaciated; no appetite for food.—Cap. pil. ſcil. iii. ter in die.*

May 20th. The pills have had no effect.—Cap. miſtur. c. † Decoct. Digital. &c. cochl.ii. larg. 3tia quaque hora, ad 3tiam vicem.

May 21ſt. Made near two quarts of water in the night, without being in the leaſt ſick. He contiued the

---

* R. Rad. ſcil. recent. ſapon. caſtiliens. pulv. Rhei opt. aa. ℈i. ol. junip. gutt. xvi. ſyr. balſ. q. s. f. maſs. in pil. xxiv. divid.

† Prepared in the ſame manner as in the former caſe.

the uſe of the mixture three times in the day till the 30th, and made about three pints of water daily, by which means the ſwellings were entirely taken away ; and his other complaints ſo much relieved, that on the 6th of June he was diſmiſſed free from complaint, except a ſlight cough. But returning to his old courſe of life, he hath had frequent attacks of his diſorder, which have been always removed by uſing the Digitalis.

Extract of a letter from Mr. Lyon, Surgeon, at Tamworth.

—Mr. Moggs was about 54 years of age, his diſeaſe a dropſy of the abdomen, attended with anaſarcous ſwellings of the limbs, &c. brought on by exceſſive drinking. I believe the firſt ſymptoms of the diſeaſe appeared the beginning of November, 1776 ; the medicines he took before you ſaw him, were ſquills in different forms, ſal diureticus and calomel, but without any good effect ; he begun the Digitalis on the 10th of July 1777 ; a few doſes of it cauſed a giddineſs in the head, and almoſt deprived him of ſight, with very great nauſea, but very little vomiting, after which a conſiderable flow of urine enſued, and in a very ſhort time, a very little water remained either in the cavity of the abdomen, or the membrana adipoſa, but he remained exceſſive weak, with a fluttering pulſe at the rate of 150 or frequently 160 in a minute ; he kept pretty free from water for upwards of twelve months ; it then collect-

collected, and neither the Digitalis nor any other medicine would carry it off. I tapped him the 2d of Auguſt 1779 in the uſual place, and took ſome gallons of water from him, but he very ſoon filled again, and as he had a very large rupture, a conſiderable quantity of the water lodged in the ſcrotum, and could not be got away by tapping in the uſual place. I therefore (on the 28th of the ſame month) made an inciſion into the lower part of the ſcrotum, and drained off all the water that way, but he was ſo very much reduced, that he died the 8th or 9th of *September* following, which was about two years and two months after he firſt begun the Digitalis.

I have had ſeveral dropſical patients relieved, and ſome perfectly recovered by the Digitalis, ſince you attended Mr. Moggs, but as I did not take any notes or make any memorandums of them, cannot give you any of them.

Communications from Dr. STOKES, Phyſician, in Stourbridge.

Dear SIR,

I ACCEPT with pleaſure your invitation to communicate what I know reſpecting the properties of *Digitalis*; and if an account of what others had diſcovered before you,* with a detail

* See this account in the Introduction.

tail of my own experience, ſhall be allowed the merit of at leaſt a well meant acknowledgment, for the early communication you were ſo kind to make me, of the valuable properties you had found in it; I ſhall conſider my time as well employed. A knowledge of what has been already done is the beſt ground work of future experiment; on which account I have been the more full on this ſubject, in hopes that given with the cautions which you mean to lay down in the cure of dropſies, it may prove alike uſeful in that of other diſeaſes, one of which ſtands foremoſt among the *opprobria* of medicine.

CASE I.

Mrs. M——. Orthopnea, pain, and exceſſive oppreſſion at the bottom of the ſternum. Pulſe irregular, with frequent intermiſſions. Appetite very much impaired. Legs anaſarcous.

Empl. veſicator. pectori dolent.
Infuſ. Digital. e ʒiii. *ad. aq. &c.* ℥viii. *cochl. j. o. h. donec nauſea excitetur vel diureſis ſatis copioſa proveniat.*

I ordered it of the above ſtrength, and to be repeated often, on account of the great emergency of the caſe, but the nauſea excited by the firſt doſe prevented its being given at ſuch ſhort intervals. A 3d doſe I found had been given, which was followed by vomitings. All her complaints gradually abated, but

but in about a fortnight recurred, notwithſtanding the uſe of infuſ. amar. &c.

Dec. 2. Infus. Digit. c. ʒiſs ad aq. &c. ʒviii. cochl. ii. horis &c. u. a.

Complaints gradually abated, ſwellings of the legs nearly gone down.

About a month afterwards you was deſired to viſit this patient.*

---

* For reaſons aſſigned at p. 100, I did not intend to introduce any caſe, occuring under my own inſpection, in the courſe of the preſent year; but it may be ſatisfactory to continue the hiſtory of this diſeaſe, as Dr. Stokes's narrative would otherwiſe be incomplete.

1785.

CASE.

Jan. 5th. Mrs. M——, Æt. 48. Hydrothorax and anaſarcous legs, of eight months duration. She had taken jallap, ſquill, ſalt of tartar, and various other medicines. I found her in a very reduced ſtate, and therefore directed only a grain and half of the Pulv. Digital. to be given night and morning. This in a few days encreaſed the ſecretion of urine, removed her difficulty of breathing, and reduced the ſwelling of her legs, without any diſturbance to her ſyſtem.

Three months afterwards, a ſevere attack of gout in her legs and arms, removing to her head, ſhe died.

Dr. Stokes had an opportunity of examining the dead body, and I had the ſatisfaction to learn from him, that there did not appear to have been any return of the dropſy.

On the examination of the body I noticed, among others, the following appearances.

About $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. of bloody water flowed out, on elevating the upper half of the ſcull, and a ſmall quantity alſo was found at the baſe.

Brain. Blood-veſſels turgid with blood, and many of thoſe of conſiderable ſize diſtended with air.

A very ſlight watery effuſion between the *Pia Mater* and *Tunica arachnoidea*. About $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. of watery fluid in the *lateral ventricles*.

Thorax. In the left cavity about 4 oz. of bloody ſerum; in the right but little. Lungs, the hinder parts loaded with blood. Adheſions of each lobe to the pleura. *Pericardium* containing but a very ſmall quantity of fluid. *Heart* containing no coagula of blood. *Valves of the Aorta* of a cartilaginous texture, as if beginning to oſſify.

Abdominal Viſcera natural, and a profuſion of *Fat* under the integuments of the abdomen and thorax, in the former to the thickneſs of an inch and upwards, and in very conſiderable quantity on the meſentery, omentum, kidneys, &c.

Obs. The intermitting pulſe ſhould ſeem to have been owing to effuſions of water in ſome of the cavities of the breaſt, as it diſappeared on the removal of the waters.

CASE

CASE II.

Mrs. C—— of K———, Æt. 80. Orthopnœa, with ſenſe of oppreſſion about the prœcordia. Unable to lie down in bed for ſome nights paſt. Anaſarca of the lower extremities. Urine very ſcanty. Complaints of ſix weeks ſtanding. Had taken *ſal. diuret. c. ol. junip.—Calom. c. jalap, et gambog.—Et ol. junip. c. ol. Terebinth.* without effect.

Feb. 7. *Infuſ. Digital. e.* ʒiii. *ad aq. &c.* ℥viii. *cochl. ii. 4tis horis.* Ordered to drink largely of *infus. baccar. junip.* The third doſe produced great nauſea which continued ten hours, during which time the urine made was about a quart. The next day her apothecary directed her to begin again with it. The ſecond doſe produced vomiting. During the next twenty hours ſhe made two quarts of water, about four times as much as ſhe drank.

From this time ſhe took no more of the *infus. Digital.* but continued the *inf. bacc. junip.* until about *March* 2d, when all the ſwellings were gone down, her reſpiration perfectly free, and ſhe herſelf quite reſtored to her former ſtate of health. On the 29th ſhe had an attack of jaundice which was ſome time after removed; ſince which ſhe has enjoyed a good ſtate of health, excepting that for ſome little time paſt her ancles have been ſlightly œdematous, which will I truſt ſoon yield to ſtrengthening medicines.

CASE III.

Mrs. M—— G——, Æt. 64. Has had fore legs for theſe thirty-four years paſt. Orthopnœa. Senſe of oppreſſion at the præcordia. Pulſe intermitting. Legs anaſarcous. Urine ſcanty, high-coloured.

Infus. Digital. c. ʒiſs ad aq. bull. ℥viii. cochl. ii. 4tis horis.

Took ſix doſes, when nauſea was excited. Urine a quart during the courſe of the night. The flow of urine continued, and complaints relieved. Sal. Mart. c. extr. gent. and afterwards with the addition of extr. cort. for which laſt ingredient ſhe had a predilection, confirmed the cure.

On the ſame day the next year I was called in to her for a ſimilar train of ſymptoms, excepting that the pulſe was but juſt perceptibly irregular.

Infus. Digital. u. a. præſcript.

The directions on the phial not being attended to, *two doſes of it were given after a nauſea had been excited*, which, with occaſional vomitings, became exceedingly oppreſſive. A ſaline draught, given in Dr. Hulme's method, a draught *ſal. c. c. gr. xii. c. conf. card. gr. x.* produced no immediate effect, but the nauſea gradually abating, inf. bacc. junip. was ordered; but this appeared to augment it, and

and a great propenſity to ſleep coming on, I directed *ſal. c. c. conf. card. aa gr. viii. 4tis horis*, which removed the unpleaſant ſymptoms and *myrrh. c. ſal. mart.* completed the cure. During the uſe of the above medicines, the urine was augmented, and the pulmonary complaints removed, even before the nauſea left her; and the ſores of her legs which were much inflamed before ſhe began with the infuſ. Digital. in a day's time aſſumed a much healthier appearance, and on her other complaints going off, they ſhewed a greater tendency to heal than ſhe had ever obſerved in them for twenty years before. This inſtance is a very pleaſing confirmation of the experience of Hulſe and Dr. Baylies, and of the advantage to be derived from a medicine, which, while it helps to heal the ulcers, removes that from the conſtitution which often renders the healing of them improper.

In one caſe in which I ordered it, the infuſion, inſtead of digeſting three hours as I had directed, was ſuffered to ſtand upon the leaves all night. The conſequence was that the firſt doſe produced conſiderable nauſea.

The two following caſes, with which I have been favoured by a phyſician very juſtly eminent, convince me of the neceſſity there is that every one who diſcovers a new medicine, or new virtues in an old one, ſhould, in announcing ſuch diſcoveries, publiſh to the world the exact manner in which he exhi-

bits such medicines, with all the precautions necessary to obtain the promised success.

In these (says my correspondent) "the infusion "was given in small doses, repeated every hour or "two, till a nausea was raised, when it was omit-"ted for a day or perhaps two, and then repeated "in the same manner."

"An Ascites emptied by it, but filled again "very speedily, though *its use was never discon-*"*nued*, and who afterwards found no salutary ef-"fects from it. Ended fatally."

"In an Anasarca it sometimes increased the "quantity of urine, and abated the swelling, but "which as often returned in as great a degree as "before, though *the medicine was still given*, and al-"ways increased in quantity so as to excite nausea. "Ended fatally."

"I have tried it in many other cases, but found "very little difference in the success attending it."

May we not be allowed to conjecture that the inefficacy of *its continued use* is owing to its narcotic property gradually diminishing the irritability of the muscular fibres of the absorbents, or possibly of the whole vascular system, and thus adding to that weakened action which seems to be the cause of the generality of dropsies, which leads us to caution the medical experimenter against trying it, at least

against

againſt its continued uſe, even in ſmall doſes, in other diſeaſes of diminiſhed energy, as continued fever, palſy, &c.

I remain with the greateſt truth,

Your obliged and affectionate friend,

Stourbridge, May 17, 1785. JONATHAN STOKES.

THE three following Hoſpital Caſes, which Dr. STOKES had an opportunity of obſerving, are related as inſtances of bad practice, and tend to demonſtrate how neceſſary it is when one phyſician adopts the medicine of another, that he ſhould alſo at firſt rigidly adopt his method.

CASE I.

Eſther K———, Æt. 33. General anaſarca, aſcites, and dyſpnœa, of ſeven months duration.

Decoct. e Digit. ʒiv. *c. aq.* ℔i. *coquend. ad* ℔ſs. *cap.* ʒi. 2*dis. horis.* 1ſt DAY. 4th doſe made her ſick. 2d DAY. The firſt doſe ſhe took to-day produced vomiting.

3d DAY.

3d Day. *Minuatur doſis ad ℥ſs.* This ſtayed upon her ſtomach, but produced an almoſt conſtant ſickneſs. Stools more frequent, water ſcarce ſenſibly increaſed; and her ſwellings not at all reduced.

4th Day. *Cap. Calomel. gambog. ſcill. &c.*

Obs. Sufficient time was not allowed to obſerve its effects, neither was the patient enjoined the free uſe of diluents. The diſeaſe terminated fatally.

CASE II.

William T——, Æt. 42. Aſcites, with cough and dyſpnœa. Abdomen very much diſtended. The reſt of his body highly emaciated. Urine thick, high coloured, and in very ſmall quantity.

Decoct Digit. (u. in Eſther K——,) 4tis horis.

1ſt Day of taking it. The 4th doſe produced ſickneſs.

2d. Vomiting after the ſecond doſe.

10th. Urine increaſed to ℔vi.

11th. Flow of urine continues. Abdomen quite flaccid.

12th. Ab-

12th. Abdomen not diminiſhed.

15th. A ſmart purging came on, and the flow of urine diminiſhed.

23d. Belly much bound. Took a cathart. powder, which was followed by a diminution of the abdomen.

29th. To take a cathart. powder every 4th morning, continuing the decoct. Digit.

32d. Urine exceedingly ſcanty.

35th. *Vin. ſcill.* ℥ſs. *o. m. &c.* This produced diuretic effects.

44th. Tapped. Terminated fatally.

Obs. Here the medicine was *continued till it ceaſed to produce diuretic effects;* and theſe effects were not aided by any ſtrengthening remedies.

CASE III.

George R——, Æt. 52. Aſcites, general anaſarca, and dyſpnœa. His legs ſo greatly diſtended that it was with great difficulty he could draw the one after the other.

Infuſ.

Infuſ. Digital. ziiiſs. ad. aq. ℔ſs. cap. ℥i. altern. horis donec nauſeam excitaverit. Rep. 3tiis diebus. tempore intermedio cap. ſol. guaic. ℥i. ter in die ex inf. ſinap.

1ſt Day of taking it. Became ſickiſh towards night.

2d Day. Made a great quantity of water during the night, and ſpat up a great deal of watery phlegm. The firſt doſe he took in the morning has produced a ſickneſs which has continued all day, but he has never vomited.

3d. Day. The change in his appearance ſo great as to make it difficult to conceive him to be the ſame perſon. Inſtead of a large corpulent man, he appeared tall, thin, and rather aged. Breathes freely, and can walk up and down ſtairs without inconvenience.

4th Day. *Decoct. bacc. junip. and cyder for common drink.*

6th Day. A ſecond courſe of his medicine produced a flow of urine almoſt as plentiful as the former, though he drank little or nothing at the time. In a day or two after he walked to ſome diſtance.

12th Day. *Pot. purgans illico.*

14th Day. *Pot. purg. c. jalap. ʒſs. 4tis diebus. Infuſ. Dig. 3tiis diebus.*

17th Day.

17th Day. *R. Gamb. gr. iii. calom. gr. ii. camph. gr. i. fyr. fimpl. fiat pil. o. n. fum. Infuf. Digit. 3tiis diebus.*

21ſt Day. Made an out-patient. The ſuperabundant flow of urine continued for the firſt three days after his laſt courſe; but ſince, the flow of ſaliva has been nearly equal to that of urine.

The ſmalls of his legs not quite reduced, and are fuller at night. He has ſhrunk round the middle from four feet two inches to three feet ſix inches; and in the calves of his legs, from ſeventeen inches to thirteen and a half.*

Obs. The waters were here very ſucceſsfully evacuated, but as you remarked to me, on communicating the caſe to you at the time, tonic medicines ſhould have been given, to ſecond the ground that had been gained, inſtead of weakening the patient by draſtic purgatives.

---

* In the three laſt recited caſes, the medicine was directed in doſes quite too ſtrong, and repeated too frequently. If Eſther K—— could have ſurvived the extreme ſickneſs, the diuretic effects would probably have taken place, and, from her time of life, I ſhould have expected a recovery. Wm. T —— ſeems to have been a bad caſe, and I think would not have been cured under any management. G. R—— certainly poſſeſſed a good conſtitution, or he muſt have ſhared the fate of the other two.

A CASE

A CASE from Mr. SHAW, Surgeon, at Stourbridge. — Communicated by Doctor STOKES.

Matth. D——, Æt. 71. Tall and thin. Diſeaſe a general anaſarca, with great difficulty of breathing. The lac ammoniac. ſomewhat relieved his breath; but the ſwellings increaſed, and his urine was not augmented. I conſidered it as a loſt caſe, but having ſeen the good effects of the Digitalis, as ordered by Dr. Stokes in the caſe of Mrs. G——, I gave him one ſpoonful of an infuſion of ʒii. to half a pint, twice a day. His breath became much eaſier, his urine increaſed conſiderably, and the ſwellings gradually diſappeared; ſince which his health has been pretty good, except that about three weeks ago, he had a ſlight dyſpnœa, with pain in his ſtomach, which were ſoon removed by a repetition of the ſame medicine.

Mr. Shaw likewiſe informs me, that he has removed pains in the ſtomach and bowels, by giving a ſpoonful of the infuſion, ʒiſs. to ℥viii. morning and night.

A Letter

A Letter from Mr. VAUX, Surgeon, in Birmingham.

Dear SIR,

I SEND you the two following cafes, wherein the Digitalis had very powerful and fenfible effects, in the cure of the different patients.

CASE I.

Mrs. O—— of L——— ftreet, in this town, aged 28, naturally of a thin, fpare habit, and her family inclinable to phthifis, fent for me on the 11th of June, 1779, at which time fhe complained of great pain in her fide, a conftant cough, expectorated much, which funk in water; had colliquative fweats and frequent purging ftools; the lower extremities and belly full of water, and from the great difficulty fhe had in breathing, I concluded there was water in the cheft alfo. The quantity of water made at a time for three weeks before I faw her, never amounted to more than a tea-cup full, frequently not fo much. Finding her in fo alarming a fituation, I gave it as my opinion fhe could receive no benefit from medicine, and requefted her not to take any; but fhe being very defirous of my ordering her fomething, I complied, and fent her a box of gum pills with fquills, and a mixture with falt of tartar: thefe medicines fhe took until the fixteenth, without any good effects: the water in her legs now began to exfude

ſude through the ſkin, and a ſmall bliſter on one of her legs broke. Believing ſhe could not exiſt much longer, unleſs an evacuation of the water could be procured; after fully iuforming her of her ſituation, and the uncertainty of her ſurviving the uſe of the medicine, I ventured to propoſe her taking the Digitalis, which ſhe chearfully agreed to. I accordingly ſent her a pint mixture, made as under, of the freſh leaves of the Digitalis. Three drams infuſed in one pint of boiling water, when cold ſtrained off, without preſſing the leaves, and two ounces of the ſtrong juniper water added to it: of this mixture ſhe was ordered four table ſpoonfulls every third hour, till it either made her ſick, purged her, or had a ſenſible effect on the kidneys. This mixture was ſent on the ſeventeenth, and ſhe began taking it at noon on the eighteenth. At one o'clock the following morning I was called up, and informed ſhe was dying. I immediately attended her, and was agreeably ſurpriſed to find their fright aroſe from her having fainted, in conſequence of the ſudden loſs of twelve quarts of water ſhe had made in about two hours. I immediately applied a roller round her belly, and, as ſoon as they could be made, 2 others, which were carried from the toes quite up the thighs. The relief afforded by theſe was immediate; but the medicine now began to affect her ſtomach ſo much, that ſhe kept nothing on it many minutes together. I ordered her to drink freely of beef tea, which ſhe did, but kept it on her ſtomach but a very ſhort time. A neutral draught in a ſtate of effervescence was taken to no good purpoſe: She therefore continued

the

the beef tea, and took no other medicine for five days, when her ſickneſs went off: her cough abated, but the pain in her ſide ſtill continuing, I applied a bliſter which had the deſired effect: her urine after the firſt day flowed naturally. Her cure was compleated by the gum pills with ſteel and the bitter infuſion. It muſt be obſerved ſhe never had any collection of water afterwards.

It affords me great pleaſure to inform you that ſhe is now living, and has ſince had four children; all of whom, I think I may juſtly ſay, are indebted to the Digitalis for their exiſtence.

There appears in this caſe a ſtriking proof of the utility of emetics in ſome kinds of conſumptions, as it appears to me the dropſy was brought on by the cough, &c. and I believe theſe were cured by the continual vomitings, occaſioned by the medicine.

CASE II.

Mr. H——, a publican, aged about 48 years, ſent for me in *March*, 1778. He complained of a cough, ſhortneſs of breathing, which prevented him from laying down in bed; his belly, thighs and legs very much diſtended with water; the quantity of urine made at a time ſeldom exceeded a ſpoonful. I requeſted him to get ſome of the Digitalis, and as they had no proper weights in the houſe, I told them to put as much of the freſh leaves as would weigh down a guinea, into half a pint of boiling water;

to

to let it ſtand till cold, then to pour off the clear liquor, and add a glaſs of gin to it, and to take three table ſpoonfuls every third hour, until it had ſome ſenſible effect upon him.

Before he had taken all the infuſion, the quantity of urine made increaſed, (he therefore left off taking it), and it continued to do ſo until all the water was evacuated. His breathing became much better, his cough abated, though it never quite left him; he being for ſome time before aſthmatic. By taking ſome tonic pills he continued quite well until the next ſpring, when he had a return of his complaint, which was carried off by the ſame means. Two years after, he had a third attack, and this alſo gave way to the medicine. Laſt year he died of a pleuriſy.

I am, &c.

Moor-Street, 8th May, 1785. JER. VAUX.

P. S. You muſt well recollect the caſe of Mrs. F——. —It was "a general dropſy—every time "ſhe took the medicine its effects were ſimilar, viz. "The diſcharge of urine came on gradually at firſt, "increaſed afterwards, and the whole of the water "both in the belly, legs, &c. was perfectly evacuated. "Although the effects were only temporary, they "were exceedingly agreeable to the patient, making "her time much more comfortable."—— *(See Caſe XLIII.)*

A Let-

A Letter from Mr. WAINWRIGHT, Surgeon, in Dudley.

Dear SIR,

IT gives me great pleaſure to find you intend to publiſh your obſervations on the Digitalis purpurea.

Several years are now elapſed ſince you communicated to me the high opinion you entertained of the diuretic qualities of this noble plant. To enſure ſucceſs, due attention was recommended to its *preparation*, its *doſe*, and its *effects* upon the ſyſtem.

I always gave the infuſion of the dried leaves; the doſe the ſame as in the preſcriptions returned. If the medicine operated on the ſtomach or bowels, it was thought prudent to forbear. When the kidneys began to perform their proper functions, and the urine to be diſcharged, a continuance of its farther uſe was unneceſſary.

Theſe remarks you made in the caſe of the firſt patient for whom you preſcribed the Digitalis in our neighbourhood, and I have found them all neceſſary at this preſent period. From the *decided* good effects that followed from its uſe, in thoſe caſes where the moſt powerful remedies had failed, I was ſoon convinced it was a moſt valuable addition to the materia medica.

The want of a certain diuretic, has long been one of the deſiderata of medicine. The Digitalis is undoubtedly at the head of that claſs, and will ſeldom, if properly adminiſtered, diſappoint the expectation. I can ſpeak with the more confidence, having, in an extenſive practice, been a happy witneſs to its good qualities.

For ſeveral years, I have given the infuſion in a variety of caſes, where there was a deficiency in the ſecretion of the urine, with the greateſt ſucceſs. In recent obſtructions, I do not recollect many failures. In anaſarcous diſeaſes, and in the anaſarca, when combined with the aſcites; in ſwellings of the limbs, and in diſeaſes of the cheſt, when there was the greateſt reaſon to believe an accumulation of ſerum, the moſt beneficial conſequences have followed from its uſe.

Had I been earlier acquainted with your intention to publiſh an account of the Digitalis, I could have tranſmitted ſome caſes, which might have ſerved to corroborate theſe aſſertions: but I am convinced the Digitalis needs not my aſſiſtance to procure a favorable reception. Its own merit will enſure ſucceſs, more than a hundred recited caſes.

I could wiſh thoſe gentlemen who intend to make uſe of this plant, to collect it in a hot dry day, when the petals fall, and the ſeed-veſſels begin to ſwell.

The

The leaves kept to the ſecond year are weaker, and their diuretic qualities much diminiſhed. It will therefore be neceſſary to gather the plant freſh every ſeaſon.

Theſe cautions are unneceſſary to the accurate botaniſt, who well knows, that a plant in the ſpring, though more ſucculent and full of juices, is deſtitute of thoſe qualities which may be expected when that plant has attained its full vigour, and the ſeed-veſſels begin to be manifeſt. But for want of attention to theſe particulars, its virtues may be thought exaggerated, or doubtful, if beneficial conſequences do not always flow from its uſe. There are diſeaſes it cannot cure; and in ſeveral of thoſe patients in this town, who firſt took the Digitalis by your orders, there was the moſt poſitive proof of the viſcera being unſound. In theſe deſperate caſes it often procured a plentiful flow of urine, and palliated a diſeaſe which medicine could not remove.

At a remote diſtance, phyſicians are ſeldom applied to for advice in trifling diſorders. Many remedies have been tried without relief, and the diſeaſe is generally obſtinate or confirmed. — It would not be fair to try the merits of the Digitalis in this ſcale. It might often fail of promoting the end deſired. I flatter myſelf the reputation of this plant will be equal to its merit, and that it will meet with a candid reception.

As there is no pleaſure equal to relieving the miſeries and diſtreſſes of our fellow-creatures, I hope you will long enjoy that peculiar felicity.

Permit me to return my thankful acknowledgments, for your free communication of a medicine, by which means, through the bleſſing of providence, I have been enabled to reſtore health and happineſs to many miſerable objects.

I am, &c.

Yours,

Dudley, April 26th, 1785. J. WAINWRIGHT.

CASE of Mr. WARD, Surgeon, in Birmingham.—Related by himſelf.

IN *September*, 1782, I was ſeized with a difficulty of breathing, and oppreſſion in my cheſt, in conſequence of taking cold from being called out in the night. My tongue was foul; my urine ſmall in quantity; my breath laborious and diſtreſſing on the ſligheſt exerciſe. I tried the medicines moſt generally recommended, ſuch as emetics, bliſters, lac ammoniacum, oxymel of ſquills, &c. but finding little or no relief, I conſulted Dr. Withering, who adviſed me to try the following preſcription.

R. Fol.

R. Fol. Digital. purp. ſiccat. ʒiſs.
Aq. bullientis ℥iv.
Aq. cinn. ſp. ℥ſs. digere per horas quatuor, et colaturæ capiat cochlear. i. nocte maneque.

He alſo deſired me to take fifty drops of tincture of cantharides three or four times a day.

After taking eight ounces of the infuſion, and about twelve drams of the drops, I was perfectly cured, and have had no return ſince. The medicine did not occaſion ſickneſs or vertigo, nor had they any other ſenſible effect than in changing the appearance, and increaſing the quantity of the urine, and rendering the tongue clean. After the laſt doſe or two indeed, I had a little nauſea, which was immediately removed by a ſmall glaſs of brandy.

Birmingham, 1ſt July, 1785.

Communications from Mr. YONGE, Surgeon, in Shiffnall, Shropſhire.

Dear SIR,

I HAVE great ſatisfaction in complying with your juſt claim, by tranſcribing outlines of the ſubſequent caſes, for inſertion in your long requeſted tract on the Digitalis purpurea. The two firſt of theſe you will eaſily recollect, the cures having been conducted immediately under your own manage-

ment, and the whole may add to that weight of evidence which long experience enables you to adduce of the efficacy of that valuable medicine. I have recited the only inſtances of its failure which occur to me, but many other, though ſucceſsful caſes, wherein its utility might ſeem dubious, and alſo the accounts received from people whoſe accuracy might be ſuſpected, I ſhall not for obvious reaſons trouble you with.

I am, dear Sir,

Your obliged friend,

Shiffnall, WILLIAM YONGE.
May 1, 1785.

CASE I.

A Gentleman aged 49, on the night of the 21ſt of Auguſt, 1784, awaked with a ſenſe of ſuffocation, which obliged him to riſe up ſuddenly in bed. I found him complaining of difficult reſpiration, particularly on lying down; the countenance pale, and the pulſe ſmaller and quicker than uſual. Some brandy and water having been given, the ſymptoms gradually abated, ſo that he ſlept in a half recumbent poſture. The following day he expreſſed a ſenſe of anxiety and weight in the cheſt, attended by quicker breathing upon motion of the body. That evening an emetic of ipecacohana was given, and afterwards a draught, with vitriolic æther and

and confect. card. aa ʒi to be repeated as the ſymptoms ſhould require it. He continued to be affected with ſlighter returns of the dyſpnœa at irregular intervals, until *September* 15th, when upon a more ſevere attack, the emetic was repeated. He now recollected ſome ſlight pain in his arms which had affected him previous to this laſt ſeizure, and was diſpoſed to conſider his complaint as rheumatic. Pills with gum ammoniac. gum guaiac. and antimonial powder were directed, with infuſ. amar. ſimpl. twice a day. The bowels were regulated by aperient pills of pulv. jalap. aloes and ſal. tartar. and ʒiſs balſam peruv. was given occaſionally to alleviate the paroxyſms of dyſpnœa.

From this period until the beginning of November, little amendment or variation happened, except that reſpiration became more permanently difficult, and particularly oppreſſed upon motion, nor was it relieved by the expectoration of a mucous diſcharge, which now increaſed conſiderably. Squills, muſk, ol. ſuccini, æther, with other medicines of the ſame kind, were now uſed, but without ſucceſs. The effects of opium and venæſection were tried. The appetite diminiſhed, and his ſleep became ſhort and diſturbed. He ſometimes ſlept lying upon his back, but generally upon his left ſide. The urine which had hitherto been of good colour, and ſufficient quantity, now became diminiſhed, and lateritious; and the ancles œdematous.

On

On the 15th of *November* a blifter was laid over the fternum, and ʒiſs of oxymel ſcillitic. was given every eight hours.

On the 18th, a more copious diſcharge of urine took place; the ſwelling of the feet ſoon diſappeared, and the reſpiration became gradually relieved.

On the 30th ʒi tinct. cantharidum twice a day in pyrmont water, with pills of ammoniac, ſal tartar. et extract. gentian. were ſubſtituted, but

On the 7th of *December*, from ſome ſymptoms of relapſe, the oxymel was uſed as before, and continued to be taken until the 27th, in doſes as large as could be diſpenſed with on account of the great nauſea which attended its exhibition: The urine was made in the quantity of four or five pints each day, during the whole time; the quantity then drank being ſeldom more than three pints. But now the ſickneſs being exceedingly depreſſing, the ſtrength failing, and the diuretic effects beginning to ceaſe, the following preſcription was directed.

R. Fol. Digitalis purpur. pulv. ʒſs.
Spec. Aromatic. ʒi. ſp. lav. c. f. pilul. no. x. capiat i. nocte maneque, et alternis diebus ſenſim augeatur doſin.

In three days the effect of this medicine became viſible, and when the doſe of the Digitalis had been increaſed

increaſed to ſix grains per day, the flow of urine generally amounted to ſeven pints every twenty-four hours. Not the leaſt ſickneſs, nor any other diſagreeable ſymptom ſupervened, though he perſevered in this plan until the end of *January* at which time the dyſpnœa was removed, and he has continued gradually to regain his fleſh, ſtrength, and appetite, without any relapſe.

CASE II.

About the middle of the year 1784 a lady aged 48, returned from London, to her native air in Shropſhire, under ſymptoms of complicated diſeaſe. It was your opinion that the plethoric ſtate, conſequent to that period, when menſtruation firſt begins to ceaſe, had under various appearances, laid the foundation of that deplorable ſtate which now preſented itſelf. The ſkin was univerſally of a pale, leaden colour; her perſon much emaciated, and her ſtrength ſo reduced, as to diſable her from walking without ſupport. The appetite fluctuating, the digeſtion impaired ſo much, that ſolids paſſed the inteſtines with little appearance of ſolution: She had generally eight or ten alvine evacuations every day, and without this number, febrile ſymptoms, attended with ſevere vertiginous affection, and vomiting regularly enſued. The ſtools were of a pale aſh colour. The urine generally pale, and at firſt in due quantity. The region of the ſtomach had

had a tenſe feel, without foreneſs: the feet and ancles œdematous, her ſleep was uncertain: the pulſe varying between 94 and 100, and feeble, except upon the approach of the menſtrual periods, which were now only marked by its increaſed ſtrength, and exacerbation of other febrile ſymptoms. Emetics, ſaline medicines, and gentle aperients were neceſſary to alleviate theſe. Six grains of ipecac. operated with ſufficient power, and half a grain of calomel would have purged with great violence.

From the time of her arrival till the middle of *Auguſt*, mercury had been continued in various forms, and in doſes ſuch as the irritable ſtate of her ſtomach and bowels would admit of. Spirit. nitri dulc.; ſal. tartar. ſquill, and cantharides were alternately employed as diuretics, but without ſucceſs, to retard the progreſs of an univerſal anaſarca, which was then advanced to ſuch degree and accompanied by ſo great debility, and other dreadful concomitants, as to threaten a ſpeedy and fatal cataſtrophe.

On the 16th of *Auguſt* you firſt ſaw her, and directed thus.

R. Mercur. cinerei gr. ii.

Fol. Digital. purpur. pulv. ℈i. f. maſs. in pill. no. xvi. dividend.—ſumat unam hora meridiana, iterumque hora quinta pomeridiana quotidie.

Capiat

Capiat lixivii ſaponac. gutt. L. in hauſt. juſcul. ſine ſale parati omni nocte.

On the 20th the flow of urine began to increaſe, and ſhe continued the medicine in the ſame doſe until the 20th of *September*, diſcharging from ſix to eight pints of water each day for the firſt week, and which quantity gradually diminiſhed as ſhe became empty. During this period ſhe complained not of any ſickneſs, except from the lixivium, which was after the firſt doſe reduced to 20 drops; and her appetite and ſtrength increaſed daily, though it was evident that no bile had yet flowed into the bowels, nor was the digeſtion at all improved. The anaſarcous appearances being then removed, the Digitalis was omitted, and pills, compoſed of mercur. cinereus, aloes, and ſal tartari directed twice a day, with ʒi. of vin. chalybeat. in infuſ. amar. ſimpl.

Her amendment in other reſpects proceeded ſlowly, but regularly, from that time until the 9th of October; when the ſtate of plethora again recurring, with its uſual attendant ſymptoms, ℥iv. of blood were taken from the arm; and this was upon the ſame occaſion, repeated in the following month, with manifeſt good conſequences; though in both inſtances the colour of the blood, as flowing from the vein could hardly be called red, and the coagulum was as weak in its coheſion as poſſible. The ſtate of the ſtomach and bowels was by this time greatly improved, in common with other parts of the

the ſyſtem; but no intromiſſion of bile had yet happened: the hardneſs about the hypogaſtric region, though leſs, continued in a conſiderable degree, and you ordered pills of mercury rubbed down, and ruſt of iron, to be taken twice a day, with a decoction of dandelion and ſal ſodæ.

A cataplaſm of linſeed was applied every night over the ſtomach and right ſide; and, with little deviation from this plan, ſhe continued to the end of the year, improving in her general health, but the hepatic affection yet remaining. It was then determined to try the effects of electricity, and gentle ſhocks were paſſed through the body daily, and as nearly as could be through the liver, in various directions.

On the fifth day there was reaſon to think that ſome gall had been ſecreted and poured out, and this became every day more evident; but it flowed only in ſmall quantity, and irregularly into the bowels, as appeared from the fæces being partially tinged by it.

In *February* the lady left this neighbourhood, and though convaleſcent, yet ſo nearly well as to promiſe us the ſatisfaction of ſeeing her perfectly reſtored.

June 29. The bile is now ſecreted in pretty good quantity, her appetite is perfectly good, her ſtrength equal to almoſt any degree of exerciſe, and her health

health in general better than it has been for ſome years.

CASE III.

Mr. W———, aged —. In *June*, 1782, was affected with ſlight difficulty in reſpiration, upon taking exerciſe or lying down in bed. Theſe ſymptoms increaſed gradually until the end of *July*, when he complained of ſenſe of weight and uneaſineſs about the præcordia; loſs of appetite; and coſtiveneſs. The urine was ſmall in quantity, and high coloured; his pulſe feeble, and intermitting; he breathed with difficulty when in bed, and ſlept little. After the exhibition of an emetic, and an opening medicine of rhubarb, ſena, and ſal tartari, he was directed to take half a dram of ſquill pill, pharm. Edinburg. night and morning, with ʒſs ſal. ſodæ in ℥iſs. infuſ. amar. ſimpl. twice a day; and theſe medicines were continued during ten days, without any ſenſible effect. A bliſter was then applied to the ſternum, and ſix grains of calomel given in the evening. The ſymptoms were now increaſed very conſiderably, in every particular; and the following infuſion was ſubſtituted for the former medicines.

R. Fol. Digital. purpur. ʒiii.
Cort. limon. ʒii. infund.
Aq. bullient. ℔i. per hor. 2 et cola. ſumat cochl. i. primo mane et repet. omni hora.

Sometime

Sometime in the night conſiderable nauſea occurred, and the following day he began to make water in great quantity, which he continued to do for three or four days. The pulſe in a few hours became regular, ſlower, and ſtronger, and, in the courſe of a week, all the ſymptoms entirely vaniſhed, and an electuary of cort. peruvian, ſal martis, and ſpec. aromatic. confirmed his cure.

In *February*, 1784, this gentleman had a relapſe of his diſeaſe, from which he again ſoon recovered by the ſame means, and is now perfectly well.

CASE IV.

G—— A——, a huſbandman, aged 57. Was in the year 1782 affected with a ſlight, but conſtant pain in his breaſt, with difficult reſpiration. His countenance was yellow; the abdomen ſwelled, and hard; his urine high coloured, and in ſmall quantity; appetite and ſleep little. Complained of frequent nauſea, and of ſudden profuſe ſweatings, which ſeemed for a ſhort time to relieve the dyſpnœa.

After the exhibition of an emetic, ſix grains of calomel were given, with a purge of jalap in the morning, and repeated in a few days, with ſome appearance of advantage. He was then directed to take ſome pills of ſquill, ſoap, and rhubarb, with a draught twice a day, conſiſting of infuſ. amar. ſimp. and ſal tartari. The ſkin ſoon became clearer and the

the pain in his breaſt conſiderably diminiſhed. But every other circumſtance remaining the ſame, and a fluctuation in the belly being now more evident, the infuſion of Digitalis as preſcribed in caſe third, was given in the doſe of one ounce twice a day.

On the 5th day the effects were apparent, and he continued his medicine for a fortnight without nauſea, making four or five pints of water every night, but little in the day, and gradually loſing the ſymptoms of his diſeaſe.

In 1784, this perſon had a relapſe, and was again cured by ſimilar treatment.

CASE V.

R—— H——, Aged 43. Towards the end of the year 1783, became affected with ſlight cough and expectoration of purulent matter. In December his ſkin became univerſally of a pale yellow colour. The abdomen was ſwelled and hard; his appetite little, and he complained of a violent and conſtant palpitation of the heart, which prevented him from ſleeping. The urine pale, and in ſmall quantity. The pulſe exceedingly ſtrong, and rebounding; beating 114 to 120 ſtrokes every minute. He ſuffered violent pain of his head, and was very feeble and emaciated. After bleeding, and the uſe of gentle aperient medicines, he continued to take the infuſion of Digitalis for ſome days, without any ſenſible effect. Other diuretics were tried to as little purpoſe

poſe. Repeated bleeding had no effect in diminiſhing the violent action of the heart. He died in January following, under complicated ſymptoms of phthiſis and aſcites.

CASE VI.

A man aged 57, who had lived freely in the ſummer of 1784, became affected with œdematous ſwelling of his legs, for which he was adviſed to drink Fox Glove Tea. He took a four ounce baſon of the infuſion made ſtrong with the green leaves, every morning for four ſucceſſive days.

On the 5th he was ſuddenly ſeized with faintneſs and cold ſweatings. I found him with a pale countenance, complaining of weakneſs, and of pain, with a ſenſe of great heat in his ſtomach and bowels. The ſwelling of the legs was entirely gone, he having evacuated urine in very large quantities for the two preceding days. He was affected with frequent diarrhœa. The pulſe was very quick and ſmall, and his extremities cold.

A ſmall quantity of broth was directed to be given him every half hour, and bliſters were applied to the ancles, by which his ſymptoms became gradually alleviated, and he recovered perfectly in the ſpace of three weeks; except a relapſe of the anaſarca, for which the Digitalis was afterwards ſucceſsfully employed, in ſmall doſes, without any diſagreeable conſequence.

CASE

CASE VII.

S—— D———, a middle aged ſingle woman, was affected in the year eighty-one, with a painful rigidity and ſlight inflammation of the integuments on the left ſide, extending from the ear to the ſhoulder. In every other particular ſhe was healthy. The uſe of warm fomentations, and opium, with two or three doſes of mercurial phyſic, afforded her eaſe and the inflammation diſappeared, but was ſucceeded by an œdematous ſwelling of the part, which very gradually extended along the arm, and downward to the breaſt, back, and belly. Friction, electricity and mercurial ointment were amongſt the number of applications unſucceſsfully employed to relieve her for the ſpace of three months, during which time ſhe continued in good general health.

In *November* ſhe became aſcitic, paſſing ſmall quantities of urine, and ſoon afterwards a ſudden dyſpnœa gave occaſion to ſuppoſe an effuſion of water in the thorax. The Digitalis, ſquills, and cantharides were given in very conſiderable doſes without effect. She died the latter end of December following.

CASE VIII.

W—— C———, a collier aged 58, was attacked in the ſpring of 1783 with a tertian ague, which he attributed to cold, by ſleeping in a coal

pit, and from which he recovered in a few days, except a ſwelling of the lower extremities, which had appeared about that time, and gradually increaſed for two or three months. The legs and thighs were greatly enlarged and œdematous. His belly was ſwelled, but no fluctuation perceptible. He made ſmall quantities of high coloured water. The appetite bad, and pulſe feeble. He had taken many medicines without relief, and was now ſo reduced in ſtrength, as to ſit up with difficulty. An infuſion of the Digitalis was directed for him, in the proportion of one ounce of the freſh leaves to a pint of water, two ounces to be taken three times a day, until the ſtomach or bowels became affected. Upon the exhibition of the ſixth doſe, naufea ſupervened, and continued to oppreſs him at intervals for two or three days, during which he paſſed large quantities of pale urine. The ſwelling, aſſiſted by moderate bandage rapidly diminiſhed, and without any repetition of his medicine, at the expiration of ſixteen days, he returned to his labour perfectly recovered.

OF THE PREPARATIONS and DOSES, OF THE FOXGLOVE.

EVERY part of the plant has more or leſs of the ſame bitter taſte, varying, however, as to ſtrength, and changing with the age of the plant and the ſeaſon of the year.

ROOT.—This varies greatly with the age of the plant. When the ſtem has ſhot up for flowering, which it does the ſecond year of its growth, the root becomes dry, nearly taſteleſs, and inert.

Some practitioners, who have uſed the root, and been ſo happy as to cure their patients without exciting ſickneſs, have been pleaſed to communicate the circumſtance to me as an improvement in the uſe of the plant. I have no doubt of the truth of their remarks, and I thank them. But the caſe of Dr. Cawley puts this matter beyond diſpute. The fact is, they have fortunately happened to uſe the root in its approach to its inert ſtate, and conſequently have not over doſed their patients. I could,

if neceſſary, bring other proof to ſhew that the root is juſt as capable as the leaves, of exciting naufea.

STEM.—The ſtem has more taſte than the root has, in the ſeaſon the ſtem ſhoots out, and leſs taſte than the leaves. I do not know that it has been particularly ſelected for uſe.

LEAVES.—Theſe vary greatly in their efficacy at different ſeaſons of the year, and, perhaps, at different ſtages of their growth; but I am not certain that this variation keeps pace with the greater or leſſer intenſity of their bitter taſte.

Some who have been habituated to the uſe of the recent leaves, tell me, that they anſwer their purpoſe at every ſeaſon of the year; and I believe them, notwithſtanding I myſelf have found very great variations in this reſpect. The ſolution of this difficulty is obvious. They have uſed the leaves in ſuch large proportion, that the doſes have been ſufficient, or more than ſufficient, even in their moſt inefficacious ſtate. *The Leaf-ſtalks* ſeem, in their ſenſible properties, to partake of an intermediate ſtate between the leaves and the ſtem.

FLOWERS.—The petals, the chives, and the pointal have nearly the taſte of the leaves, and it has been ſuggeſted to me, by a very ſenſible and judicious friend, that it might be well to fix on the flower for internal uſe. I ſee no objection to the propoſition; but I have not tried it.

SEEDS.

SEEDS.—Theſe I believe are equally untried.

From this view of the different parts of the plant, it is ſufficiently obvious why I ſtill continue to prefer the leaves.

Theſe ſhould be gathered after the flowering ſtem has ſhot up, and about the time that the bloſſoms are coming forth.

The leaf-ſtalk and mid-rib of the leaves ſhould be rejected, and the remaining part ſhould be dried, either in the ſun-ſhine, or on a tin pan or pewter diſh before a fire.

If well dried, they readily rub down to a beautiful green powder, which weighs ſomething leſs than one-fifth of the original weight of the leaves. Care muſt be taken that the leaves be not ſcorched in drying, and they ſhould not be dried more than what is requiſite to allow of their being readily reduced to powder.

I give to adults, from one to three grains of this powder twice a day. In the reduced ſtate in which phyſicians generally find dropſical patients, four grains a day are ſufficient. I ſometimes give the powder alone; ſometimes unite it with aromatics, and ſometimes form it into pills with a ſufficient quantity of ſoap or gum ammoniac.

If a liquid medicine be preferred, I order a dram of theſe dried leaves to be infuſed for four hours in half a pint of boiling water, adding to the ſtrained liquor an ounce of any ſpirituous water. One ounce of this infuſion given twice a day, is a medium doſe for an adult patient. If the patient be ſtronger than uſual, or the ſymptoms very urgent, this doſe may be given once in eight hours; and on the contrary in many inſtances half an ounce at a time will be quite ſufficient. About thirty grains of the powder or eight ounces of the infuſion, may generally be taken before the nauſea commences.

The ingenuity of man has ever been fond of exerting itſelf to vary the forms and combinations of medicines. Hence we have ſpirituous, vinous, and acetous tinctures; extracts hard and ſoft, ſyrups with ſugar or honey, &c. but the more we multiply the forms of any medicine, the longer we ſhall be in aſcertaining its real doſe. I have no laſting objection however to any of theſe formulæ except the extract, which, from the nature of its preparation muſt ever be uncertain in its effects; and a medicine whoſe fulleſt doſe in ſubſtance does not exceed three grains, cannot be ſuppoſed to ſtand in need of condenſation.

It appears from ſeveral of the caſes, that when the Digitalis is diſpoſed to purge, opium may be joined with it advantageouſly; and when the bowels are too tardy, jalap may be given at the ſame time,

without

without interfering with its diuretic effects; but I have not found benefit from any other adjunct.

From this view of the doſes in which the Digitalis really ought to be exhibited, and from the evidence of many of the caſes, in which it appears to have been given in quantities ſix, eight, ten or even twelve times more than neceſſary, we muſt admit as an inference either that this medicine is perfectly ſafe when given as I adviſe, or that the medicines in daily uſe are highly dangerous.

EFFECTS,

EFFECTS, RULES, and CAUTIONS.

THE Foxglove when given in very large and quickly-repeated doſes, occaſions ſickneſs, vomiting, purging, giddineſs, confuſed viſion, objects appearing green or yellow; increaſed ſecretion of urine, with frequent motions to part with it, and ſometimes inability to retain it; ſlow pulſe, even as ſlow as 35 in a minute, cold ſweats, convulſions, ſyncope, death.*

When given in a leſs violent manner, it produces moſt of theſe effects in a lower degree; and it is curious to obſerve, that the ſickneſs, with a certain doſe of the medicine, does not take place for many hours after its exhibition has been diſcontinued; that the flow of urine will often precede, ſometimes accompany, frequently follow the ſickneſs at the diſtance of ſome days, and not unfrequently be checked by it. The ſickneſs thus excited, is extremely different from that occaſioned by any other medicine; it is peculiarly diſtreſſing to the patient; it ceaſes, it recurs again as violent as before; and thus it will continue to recur for three or four days, at diſtant and more diſtant intervals.

Theſe

* I am doubtful whether it does not ſometimes excite a copious flow of ſaliva.—See caſes at pages 115, 154, and 155.

Thefe ſufferings of the patient are generally rewarded by a return of appetite, much greater than what exiſted before the taking of the medicine.

But theſe ſufferings are not at all neceſſary; they are the effects of our inexperience, and would in ſimilar circumſtances, more or lefs attend the exhibition of almoſt every active and powerful medicine we uſe.

Perhaps the reader will better underſtand how it ought to be given, from the following detail of my own improvement, than from precepts peremptorily delivered, and their ſource veiled in obſcurity.

At firſt I thought it neceſſary *to bring on and continue the ſickneſs, in order to enſure the diuretic effects.*

I ſoon learnt that the naufea being once excited, it was unneceſſary to repeat the medicine, as it was certain to recur frequently, at intervals more or lefs diſtant.

Therefore my patients were ordered *to perſiſt until the naufea came on, and then to ſtop.* But it ſoon appeared that the diuretic effects would often take place firſt, and ſometimes be checked when the ſickneſs or a purging ſupervened.

The

The direction was therefore enlarged thus—*Continue the medicine until the urine flows, or ſickneſs or purging take place.*

I found myſelf ſafe under this regulation for two or three years; but at length caſes occurred in which the pulſe would be retarded to an alarming degree, without any other preceding effect.

The directions therefore required an additional attention to the ſtate of the pulſe, and it was moreover of conſequence not to repeat the doſes too quickly, but to allow ſufficient time for the effects of each to take place, as it was found very poſſible to pour in an injurious quantity of the medicine, before any of the ſignals for forbearance appeared.

Let the medicine therefore be given in the doſes, and at the intervals mentioned above:—let it be continued until it either acts on the kidneys, the ſtomach, the pulſe, or the bowels; let it be ſtopped upon the firſt appearance of any one of theſe effects, and I will maintain that the patient will not ſuffer from its exhibition, nor the practitioner be diſappointed in any reaſonable expectation.

If it purges, it ſeldom ſucceeds well.

The patients ſhould be enjoined to drink very freely during its operation. I mean, they ſhould drink whatever they prefer, and in as great quantity

tity as their appetite for drink demands. This direction is the more neceſſary, as they are very generally prepoſſeſſed with an idea of drying up a dropſy, by abſtinence from liquids, and fear to add to the diſeaſe, by indulging their inclination to drink.

In caſes of aſcites and anaſarca; when the patients are weak, and the evacuation of the water rapid; the uſe of proper bandage is indiſpenſably neceſſary to their ſafety.

If the water ſhould not be wholly evacuated, it is beſt to allow an interval of ſeveral days before the medicine be repeated, that food and tonics may be adminiſtered; but truth compels me to ſay, that the uſual tonic medicines have in theſe caſes very often deceived my expectations.

From ſome caſes which have occurred in the courſe of the preſent year, I am diſpoſed to believe that the Digitalis may be given in ſmall doſes, viz. two or three grains a day, ſo as gradually to remove a dropſy, without any other than mild diuretic effects, and without any interruption to its uſe until the cure be compleated.

If inadvertently the doſes of the Foxglove ſhould be preſcribed too largely, exhibited too rapidly, or urged to too great a length; the knowledge of a remedy to counteract its effects would be a deſirable thing.

thing. Such a remedy may perhaps in time be diſcovered. The uſual cordials and volatiles are generally rejected from the ſtomach; aromatics and ſtrong bitters are longer retained; brandy will ſometimes remove the ſickneſs when only ſlight; I have ſometimes thought ſmall doſes of opium uſeful, but I am more confident of the advantage from bliſters. Mr. Jones *(Page* 135) in one caſe, found mint tea to be retained longer than other things.

CON-

CONSTITUTION of PATIENTS.

INDEPENDENT of the degree of diſeaſe, or of the ſtrength or age of the patient, I have had occaſion to remark, that there are certain conſtitutions favourable, and others unfavourable to the ſucceſs of the Digitalis.

From large experience, and attentive obſervation, I am pretty well enabled to decide *a priori* upon this matter, and I wiſh to enable others to do the ſame: but I feel myſelf hardly equal to the undertaking. The following hints, however, aiding a degree of experience in others, may lead them to accompliſh what I yet can deſcribe but imperfectly.

It ſeldom ſucceeds in men of great natural ſtrength, of tenſe fibre, of warm ſkin, of florid complexion, or in thoſe with a tight and cordy pulſe.

If the belly in aſcites be tenſe, hard, and circumſcribed, or the limbs in anaſarca ſolid and reſiſting, we have but little to hope.

On the contrary, if the pulſe be feeble or intermitting, the countenance pale, the lips livid, the ſkin cold, the ſwollen belly ſoft and fluctuating, or the

the anaſarcous limbs readily pitting under the preſſure of the finger, we may expect the diuretic effects to follow in a kindly manner.

In caſes which foil every attempt at relief, I have been aiming, for ſome time paſt, to make ſuch a change in the conſtitution of the patient, as might give a chance of ſucceſs to the Digitalis.

By blood-letting, by neutral ſalts, by chryſtals of tartar, ſquills, and occaſional purging, I have ſucceeded, though imperfectly. Next to the uſe of the lancet, I think nothing lowers the tone of the ſyſtem more effectually than the ſquill, and conſequently it will always be proper, in ſuch caſes, to uſe the ſquill; for if that fail in its deſired effect, it is one of the beſt preparatives to the adoption of the Digitalis.

A tendency to paralytic affections, or a ſtroke of the palſy having actually taken place, is no objection to the uſe of the Digitalis; neither does a ſtone exiſting in the bladder forbid its uſe. Theoretical ideas of ſedative effects in the former, and apprehenſions of its excitement of the urinary organs in the latter caſe, might operate ſo as to make us with-hold relief from the patient; but experience tells me, that ſuch apprehenſions are groundleſs.

INFER-

INFERENCES.

TO prevent any improper influence, which the above recitals of the efficacy of the medicine, aided by the novelty of the ſubject, may have upon the minds of the younger part of my readers, in raiſing their expectations to too high a pitch, I beg leave to deduce a few inferences, which I apprehend the facts will fairly ſupport.

I. That the Digitalis will not univerſally act as a diuretic.

II. That it does do ſo more generally than any other medicine.

III. That it will often produce this effect after every other probable method has been fruitleſsly tried.

IV. That if this fails, there is but little chance of any other medicine ſucceeding.

V. That in proper doſes, and under the management now pointed out, it is mild in its operation, and gives leſs diſturbance to the ſyſtem, than ſquill, or almoſt any other active medicine.

VI. That when dropſy is attended by palſy, unſound viſcera, great debility, or other complication of diſeaſe, neither the Digitalis, nor any other diuretic

retic can do more than obtain a truce to the urgency of the ſymptoms; unleſs by gaining time, it may afford opportunity for other medicines to combat and ſubdue the original diſeaſe.

VII. That the Digitalis may be uſed with advantage in every ſpecies of dropſy, except the encyſted.

VIII. That it may be made ſubſervient to the cure of diſeaſes, unconnected with dropſy.

IX. That it has a power over the motion of the heart, to a degree yet unobſerved in any other medicine, and that this power may be converted to ſalutary ends.

PRACTICAL

PRACTICAL REMARKS ON DROPSY, AND SOME OTHER DISEASES.

THE following remarks consist partly of matter of fact, and partly of opinion. The former will be permanent; the latter must vary with the detection of error, or the improvement of knowledge. I hazard them with diffidence, and hope they will be examined with candour; not by a contrast with other opinions, but by an attentive comparison with the phœnomena of disease.

ANASARCA.

§ 1. THE anasarca is generally curable when seated in the sub-cutaneous cellular membrane, or in the substance of the lungs.

§ 2. When the abdominal viscera in general are greatly enlarged, which they sometimes are, without effused fluid in the cavity of the abdomen; the disease is incurable. After death, the more solid viscera are found very large and pale. If the cavity contains water, that water may be removed by diuretics.

§ 3. In ſwollen legs and thighs, where the reſiſtance to preſſure is conſiderable, the tendency to tranſparency in the ſkin not obvious, and where the alteration of poſture occaſions but little alteration in the ſtate of diſtenſion, the cure cannot be effected by diuretics.

Is this difficulty of cure occaſioned by ſpiſſitude in the effuſed fluids, by want of proper communication from cell to cell, or is the diſeaſe rather cauſed by a morbid growth of the ſolids, than by an accumulation of fluid?

Is not this diſeaſe in the limbs ſimilar to that of the viſcera (§ 2)?

§ 4. Anaſarcous ſwellings often take place in palſied limbs, in arms as well as legs; ſo that the ſwelling does not depend merely upon poſition.

§ 5. Is there not cauſe to ſuſpect that many dropſies originate from paralytic affections of the lymphatic abſorbents? And if ſo, is it not probable that the Digitalis, which is ſo effectual in removing dropſy, may alſo be uſed advantageouſly in ſome kinds of palſy?

ASCITES,

§ 6. IF exiſting alone, (*i. e.*) without accompanying anaſarca, is in children curable; in adults generally incurable by medicines. Tapping may be uſed

uſed here with better chance for ſucceſs than in more complicated dropſies. Sometimes cured by vomiting.

ASCITES and ANASARCA.

§ 7. INCURABLE if dependant upon irremediably diſeaſed viſcera, or on a gouty conſtitution, ſo debilitated, that the gouty paroxyſms no longer continue to be formed.

In every other ſituation the diſeaſe yields to diuretics and tonics.

ASCITES, ANASARCA, and HYDROTHORAX.

§ 8. UNDER this complication, though the ſymptoms admit of relief, the reſtoration of the conſtitution can hardly be hoped for.

ASTHMA.

§ 9. THE true ſpaſmodic aſthma, a rare diſeaſe —is not relieved by Digitalis.

§ 10. In the greater part of what are called aſthmatical caſes, the real diſeaſe is anaſarca of the lungs, and is generally to be cured by diuretics. (See § 1.) This is almoſt always combined with ſome ſwelling of the legs.

§ 11. There is another kind of aſthma, in which change of poſture does not much affect the patient. I believe it to be cauſed by an infarction of the lungs. It is incurable by diuretics; but it is often accompanied with a degree of anaſarca, and ſo far it admits of relief.

Is not this diſeaſe ſimilar to that in the limbs at (§ 3,) and alſo to that of the abdominal viſcera at (§ 2.)?

ASTHMA and ANASARCA.

§ 12. IF the aſthma be of the kind mentioned at (§§ 9 and 11,) diuretics can only remove the accompanying anaſarca. But if the affection of the breath depends alſo upon cellular effuſion, as it moſtly does, the patient may be taught to expect a recovery.

ASTHMA and ASCITES.

§ 13. A RARE combination, but not incurable if the the abdominal viſcera are ſound. The aſthma is here moſt probably of the anaſarcous kind (§ 10;) and this being ſeldom confined to the lungs only, the diſeaſe generally appears in the following form.

ASTHMA,

ASTHMA, ASCITES, and ANASARCA.

§ 14. THE curability of this combination will depend upon the circumſtances mentioned in the preceding ſection, taking alſo into the account the ſtrength or weakneſs of the patient.

EPILEPSY.

§ 15. IN epilepſy dependant upon effuſion, the Digitalis will effect a cure; and in the caſes alluded to, the dropſical ſymptoms were unequivocal. It has not had a ſufficient trial in my hands, to determine what it can do in other kinds of epilepſy,

HYDATID DROPSY.

§ 16. THIS may be diſtinguiſhed from common aſcites, by the want of evident fluctuation. It is common to both ſexes. It does not admit of a cure either by tapping or by medicine.

HYDROCEPHALUS.

§ 17. THIS diſeaſe, which has of late ſo much attracted the attention of the medical world, I believe, originates in inflammation; and that the water found in the ventricles of the brain after death, is the conſequence, and not the cauſe of the illneſs.

It has ſeldom happened to me to be called upon in the earlier ſtages of this complaint, and the ſymp-

toms are at firſt ſo ſimilar to thoſe uſually attendant upon dentition and worms, that it is very difficult to pronounce decidedly upon the real nature of the diſeaſe; and it is rather from the failure of the uſual modes of relief, than from any other more decided obſervation, that we at length dare to give it a name.

At firſt, the febrile ſymptoms are ſometimes ſo unſteady, that I have known them miſtaken for the ſymptoms of an intermittent, and the cure attempted by the bark.

In the more advanced ſtages, the diagnoſtics obtrude themſelves upon our notice, and put the ſituation of the patient beyond a doubt. But this does not always happen. The variations of the pulſe, ſo accurately deſcribed by the late Dr. Whytt, do not always enſue. The dilatation of the pupils, the ſquinting, and the averſion to light, do not univerſally exiſt. The ſcreaming upon raiſing the head from the pillow or the lap, and the fluſhing of the cheeks, I once conſidered as affording indubitable marks of the diſeaſe; but in a child which I ſometime ſince attended with Dr. Aſh, the pulſe was uniformly about 85, (except during the firſt week, before we had the care of the patient.) The child never ſhewed any averſion to the light; never had dilated pupils, never ſquinted, never ſcreamed when raiſed from the lap or taken out of the bed, nor did we obſerve any remarkable fluſhing of the cheeks; and the ſleep was quiet, but ſometimes moaning.

Frequent

Frequent vomiting exiſted from the firſt, but ceaſed for ſeveral days towards the concluſion. One or two worms came away during the illneſs, and it was all along difficult to purge the child. Three days before death, the right ſide became ſlightly paralytic, and the pupil of that eye ſomewhat dilated.

After death, about two ounces and a half of water were found in the ventricles of the brain, and the veſſels of the dura mater were turgid with blood.

If I am right as to the nature of hydrocephalus, that it is at firſt dependant upon inflammation, or congeſtion; and that the water in the ventricles is a conſequence, and not a cauſe of the diſeaſe; the curative intentions ought to be extremely different in the firſt and the laſt ſtages.

It happens very rarely that I am called to patients at the beginning, but in two inſtances wherein I was called at firſt, the patients were cured by repeated topical bleedings, vomits, and purges.

Some years ago I mentioned theſe opinions, and the ſucceſs of the practice reſulting from them, to Dr. Quin, now phyſician at Dublin. That gentleman had lately taken his degree, and had choſen hydrocephalus for the ſubject of his theſis in the year 1779. In this very ingenious eſſay, which he gave me the ſame morning, I was much pleaſed to find that the author had not only held the ſame ideas

ideas relative to the nature of the diſeaſe, but had alſo confirmed them by diſſections.

In the year 1781, another caſe in the firſt ſtage demanded my attention. The reader is referred back to Caſe LXIX for the particulars.

I have not yet been able to determine whether the Digitalis can or cannot be uſed with advantage in the ſecond ſtage of the hydrocephalus. In Caſe XXXIII. the ſymptoms of death were at hand; in Caſe LXIX. the practice, though ſucceſsful, was too complicated, and in Caſe CLI. the medicine was certainly ſtopped too ſoon.

When we conſider what enormous quantities of mercury may be uſed in this complaint, without affecting the ſalivary glands, it ſeems probable that other parts may be equally inſenſible to the action of their peculiar ſtimuli, and therefore that the Digitalis ought to be given in much larger doſes in this, than in other diſeaſes.

HYDROTHORAX.

§ 18. UNDER this name I alſo include the dropſy of the pericardium.

The intermitting pulſe, and pain in the arms, ſufficiently diſtinguiſh this diſeaſe from aſthma, and and from anaſarcous lungs.

It is very univerſally cured by the Digitalis.

§ 19. I lately

§ 19. I lately met with two cafes which had been conſidered and treated as angina pectoris. They both appeared to me to be cafes of hydrothorax. One ſubject was a clergyman, whoſe ſtrength had been ſo compleatly exhauſted by the continuance of the diſeaſe, and the attempts to relieve it, that he did not ſurvive many days. The other was a lady, whoſe time of life made me ſuſpect effuſion. I directed her to take ſmall doſes of the pulv. Digitalis, which in eight days removed all her complaints. This happened ſix months ago, and ſhe remains perfectly well.

HYDROTHORAX and ANASARCA.

§ 20. THIS combination is very frequent, and, I believe, may always be cured by the Digitalis.

§ 21. Dropſies in the cheſt either with or without anaſarcous limbs, are much more curable than thoſe of the belly. Probably becauſe the abdominal viſcera are more frequently diſeaſed in the latter than in the former cafes.

INSANITY.

§ 22. I APPREHEND this diſeaſe to be more frequently connected with ſerous effuſion than has been commonly imagined.

§ 23. Where appearances of anaſarca point out the true cauſe of the complaint, as in cafes XXIV. and XXXIV.

XXXIV. the happieſt effects may be expected from the Digitalis; and men of more experience than myſelf in caſes of inſanity, will probably employ it ſucceſsfully in other leſs obvious circumſtances.

NEPHRITIS CALCULOSA.

§ 24. WE have had ſufficient evidence of the efficacy of the Foxglove in removing the Dyſuria and other ſymptoms of this diſeaſe; but probably it is not in theſe caſes preferable to the tobacco.*

OVARIUM DROPSY.

§ 25. THIS ſpecies of encyſted dropſy is not without difficulty diſtinguiſhable from an aſcites; and yet it is neceſſary to diſtinguiſh them, becauſe the two diſeaſes require different treatment and becauſe the probality of a cure is much greater in one than in the other.

§ 26. The ovarium dropſy is generally ſlow in its progreſs; for a conſiderable time the patient though ſomewhat emaciated, does not loſe the appearance of health, and the urine flows in the uſual quantity. It is ſeldom that the practitioner is called in early enough to diſtinguiſh by the feel on which ſide the cyſt originated, and the patients do not attend to that circumſtance themſelves. They generally menſtruate

* See an original and valuable treatiſe by Dr. Fowler, entitled, *Medical Reports of the Effects of Tobacco.*

ſtruate regularly in the incipient ſtate of the diſeaſe, and it is not until the preſſure from the ſac becomes very great, that the urinary ſecretion diminiſhes. In this ſpecies of dropſy, the patients, upon being queſtioned, acknowledge even from a pretty early date, pains in the upper and inner parts of the thighs, ſimilar to thoſe which women experience in a ſtate of pregnancy. Theſe pains are for a length of time greater in one thigh than in the other, and I believe it will be found that the diſeaſe originated on that ſide.

§ 27. The ovarium dropſy defies the power of medicine. It admits of relief, and ſometimes of a cure, by tapping. I ſubmit to the conſideration of practitioners, how far we may hope to cure this diſeaſe by a ſeton or a cauſtic. —— In the LXIſt caſe the patient was too much reduced, and the diſeaſe too far advanced to allow of a cure by any method; but it teaches us that a cauſtic may be uſed with ſafety.

§ 28. When tapping becomes neceſſary, I always adviſe the adoption of the waiſtcoat bandage or belt, invented by the late very juſtly celebrated Dr. Monro, and deſcribed in the firſt volume of the Medical Eſſays. I alſo enjoin my patients to wear this bandage afterwards, from a perſuaſion that it retards the return of the diſeaſe. The proper uſe of bandage, when the diſorder firſt diſcovers itſelf, certainly contributes much to prevent its increaſe.

OVA-

OVARIUM DROPSY WITH ANASARCA.

§ 29. THE anaſarca does not appear until the encyſted dropſy is very far advanced. It is then probably cauſed by weakneſs and preſſure. The Digitalis removes it for a time.

PHTHISIS PULMONALIS.

§ 30. This is a very increaſing malady in the preſent day. It is no longer limited to the middle part of life: children at five years of age die of it, and old people at ſixty or ſeventy. It is not confined to the flat-cheſted, the fair-ſkinned, the blue eyed, the light-haired, or the ſcrophulous: it often attacks people with full cheſts, brown ſkins, dark hair and eyes, and thoſe in whoſe family no ſcrophulous taint can be traced. It is certainly infectious. The very ſtrict laws ſtill exiſting in Italy to prevent the infection from conſumptive patients, were probably not enacted originally without a ſufficient cauſe. We ſeem to be approaching to that ſtate which firſt made ſuch reſtrictions neceſſary, and in the further courſe of time, the diſeaſe will probably fall off again, both in virulency and frequency.

§ 31. The younger part of the female ſex are liable to a diſeaſe very much reſembling a true conſumption, and from which it is difficult to diſtinguiſh it; but this diſeaſe is curable by ſteel and bitters. A criterion of true phthiſis has been ſought for in the

ſtate

ſtate of the teeth ; but the exceptions to that rule are numerous. An unuſual dilatation of the pupil of the eye, is the moſt certain characteriſtic.*

§ 32. Sydenham aſſerts, that the bark did not more certainly cure an intermittent, than riding did a conſumption. We muſt not deny the truth of an aſſertion, from ſuch authority, but we muſt conclude that the diſeaſe was more eaſily curable a century ago than it is at preſent.

§ 33. If the Digitalis is no longer uſeful in conſumptive caſes, it muſt be that I know not how to manage it, or that the diſeaſe is more fatal than formerly ; for it would be hard to deny the teſtimony cited at page 9. I wiſh others would undertake the enquiry.

§ 34. When phthiſis is accompanied with anaſarca, or when there is reaſon to ſuſpect hydrothorax, the Digitalis will often relieve the ſufferings, and prolong the life of the patient.

§ 35. Many

* Many years ago I communicated to my friend, Dr. Percival, an account of ſome trials of breathing fixed air in conſumptive caſes. The reſults were publiſhed by him in the ſecond Vol. of his very uſeful Eſſays Medical and Experimental, and have ſince been copied into other publications. I take this opportunity of acknowledging that I ſuſpect myſelf to have been miſtaken in the nature of the diſeaſe there mentioned to have been cured. I believe it was a caſe of *Vomica*, and not a true *Phthiſis* that was cured. The Vomica is almoſt always curable. The fixed air corrects the ſmell of the matter, and very ſhortly removes the hectic fever. My patients not only inſpire it, but I keep large jars of the effervescing mixture conſtantly at work in their chambers.

§ 35. Many years ago, during an attendance upon Mr. B——, of a conſumptive family, and himſelf in the laſt ſtage of a phthiſis; after he was ſo ill as to be confined to his chamber, his breathing became ſo extremely difficult and diſtreſſing, that he wiſhed rather to die than to live, and urged me warmly to deviſe ſome mode to relieve him. Suſpecting ſerous effuſion to be the cauſe of this ſymptom, and he being a man of ſenſe and reſolution, I fully explained my ideas to him, and told him what kind of operation might afford him a chance of relief; for I was then but little acquainted with the Digitalis. He was earneſt for the operation to be tried, and with the aſſiſtance of Mr. Parrott, a very reſpectable ſurgeon of this place, I got an opening made between the ribs upon the lower and hinder part of the thorax. About a pint of fluid was immediately diſcharged, and his breath became eaſy. This fluid coagulated by heat.

After ſome days a copious purulent diſcharge iſſued from the opening, his cough became leſs troubleſome, his expectoration leſs copious, his appetite and ſtrength returned, he got abroad, and the wound, which became very troubleſome, was allowed to heal.

He then undertook a journey to London; whilſt there he became worſe: returned home, and died conſumptive ſome weeks afterwards.

PUER-

PUERPERAL ANASARCA.

§ 36. THIS diſeaſe admits of an eaſy and certain cure by the Digitalis.

§ 37. This ſpecies of dropſy may originate from other cauſes than child birth. In the beginning of laſt *March*, a gentleman at Wolverhampton deſired my advice for very large and painful ſwelled legs and thighs. He was a temperate man, not of a dropſical habit, had great pain in his groins, and attributed his complaints to a fall from his horſe. He had taken diuretics, and the ſtrongeſt draſtic purgatives with very little benefit. Conſidering the anaſarca as cauſed by the diſeaſed inguinal glands, I ordered common poultice and mercurial ointment to the groins, three grains of pulv. fol. Digitalis night and morning, and a cooling diuretic decoction in the day-time. He ſoon loſt his pain, and the ſwellings gradually ſubſided.

THE END.

BOOKS,

Printed for G. G. J. and J. ROBINSON, Bookfellers, Paternoſter-Row, London.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE

Scarlet Fever and Sore Throat,

Or, SCARLATINA ANGINOSA;

Particularly as it appeared at BIRMINGHAM in the Year 1778.

By WILLIAM WITHERING, M. D.

Price 1s. 6d.

Alſo, Price 2s. 6d.

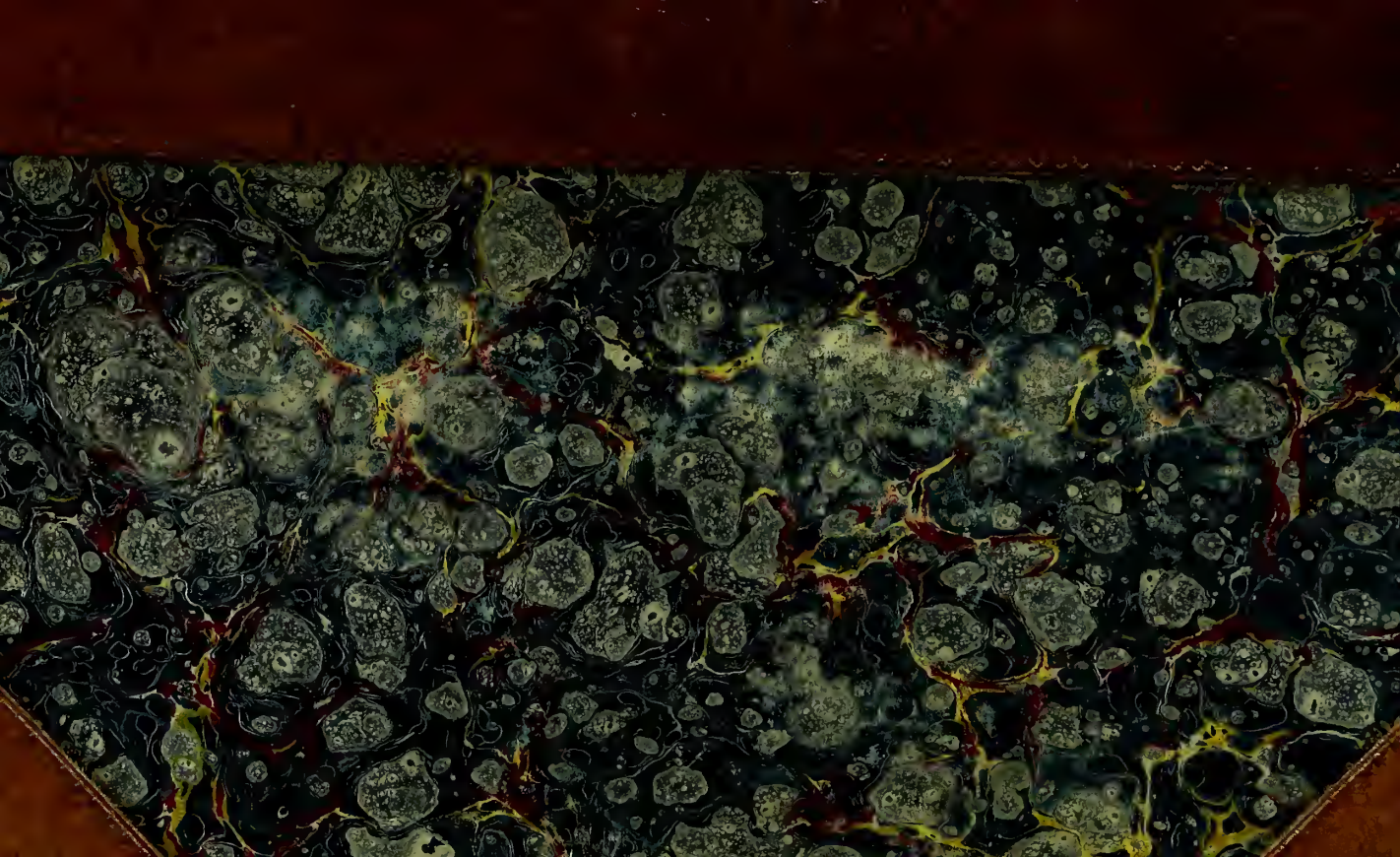
Outlines of MINERALOGY,

Tranſlated from the original of Sir TORBERN BERGMAN; with NOTES,

By WILLIAM WITHERING, M. D.

Member of the Royal Medical Society at Edinburgh.

In the Spring of the Year 1786, will be publiſhed, by the ſame Author, a New Edition of the

BOTANICAL ARRANGEMENT.

With very great Additions; in Three Vols. large Octavo.